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**THE EVERY-DAY LIFE OF  
ABRAHAM LINCOLN**



# THE EVERY-DAY LIFE OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

A NARRATIVE AND DESCRIPTIVE  
BIOGRAPHY WITH PEN-PICTURES  
AND PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS  
BY THOSE WHO KNEW HIM

BY

FRANCIS FISHER BROWNE

*Compiler of "Golden Poems," "Bugle Echoes: Poems of  
the Civil War," "Laurel-Crowned Verse," etc.*

NEW AND THOROUGHLY REVISED EDITION, FROM NEW PLATES, WITH  
AN ENTIRELY NEW PORTRAIT OF LINCOLN, FROM A  
CHARCOAL STUDY BY J. N. MARBLE

VOLUME TWO



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## CHAPTER XV.

Lincoln at the Helm — First Days in Washington — Meeting Public Men and Discussing Public Affairs — The Inauguration — The Inaugural Address — A New Era Begun — Lincoln in the White House — The First Cabinet — The President and the Office-seekers — Southern Prejudice against Lincoln — Ominous Portents, but Lincoln not Dismayed — The President's Reception Room — Varied Impressions of the New President — Guarding the White House.

THE week following Lincoln's arrival in Washington, and preceding his inauguration, was for him one of incessant activity. From almost the first moment he was engrossed either in preparations for his inauguration and the official responsibilities which would immediately follow that event, or in receiving the distinguished callers who hastened to meet him and in discussing with them the grave aspects of political affairs. Without rest or opportunity to survey the field that lay before him, or any preparations save such as the resources of his own strong character might afford him, he was plunged instantly into the great political maelstrom in which he was to remain for four long years, and whose wild vortex might well have bewildered an eye less sure, a will less resolute, and a brain less cool than his. As Emerson put it, "The new pilot was hurried to the helm in a tornado."

"Mr. Lincoln's headquarters," says Congressman Riddle of Ohio, "were at Willard's Hotel; and the few days before the inauguration were given up to a continuous reception in the broad corridor of the second floor, near the stairway. I remember a notable morning when the majestic General Scott, in full dress,

sword, plumes, and bullion, came to pay his respects to the incoming President. The scene was impressive. By the unknown law that ruled his spirits, Mr. Lincoln was at his best, complete master of himself and of all who came within the magic of his presence. Never was he happier, speaking most of the time, flashing with anecdote and story. That time now seems as remote as things of a hundred years ago. The war antiquated all that went before it. The Washington, the men, the spirit of that now ancient time, have faded past all power to recall and reproduce them. The real Washington was as essentially Southern as Richmond or Baltimore. 'Lincoln and his vandals,' fresh from the North and West, were thronging the wide, squat, unattractive city, from which the bolder and braver rebel element had not yet departed."

Dr. George B. Loring, of Massachusetts, who was one of the first to meet Lincoln after his arrival in Washington, says: "I saw him on his arrival, and when he made his first appearance in a public place. I was standing in the upper hall of Willard's Hotel, conversing with a friend and listening to the confused talk of the crowded drawing-room adjoining. As we stood there, a tall and awkward form appeared above the stairs, especially conspicuous, as it came into view, for a new and stylish hat. It was evidently President Lincoln, whom neither of us had seen before. As soon as his presence was known, the hall was thronged from the drawing-rooms. He seemed somewhat startled by the crowd, did not remove his hat, wended his way somewhat rapidly and with mere passing recognition, and took shelter in his room. When the crowd had dispersed, my friend and myself—although we had opposed his election—called upon him to pay our respects. He received us with great cordiality, spoke freely of the difficulties by which he was surrounded,

and referred with evident satisfaction to the support he had received in Massachusetts. 'I like your man Banks,' said he, 'and have tried to find a place for him in my Cabinet; but I am afraid I shall not quite fetch it.' He bore the marks of anxiety in his countenance, which, in its expression of patience, determination, resolve, and deep innate modesty, was extremely touching."

Before leaving Springfield Lincoln had prepared his inaugural message with great care, and placed it in a "gripsack" for transportation to Washington. An odd incident, by which the message came near being lost on the journey, was afterwards related by Lincoln to a friend. When the party reached Harrisburg Lincoln asked his son Robert where the message was, and was taken aback by his son's confession that in the excitement caused by the enthusiastic reception he believed he had let a waiter have the gripsack. Lincoln, in narrating the incident, said: "My heart went up into my mouth, and I started downstairs, where I was told that if a waiter had taken the gripsack I should probably find it in the baggage-room. Going there, I saw a large pile of gripsacks and other baggage, and thought that I discovered mine. My key fitted it, but on opening there was nothing inside but a few paper collars and a flask of whisky. A few moments afterward I came across my own gripsack, with the document in it all right."

The fourth of March soon came, and with it the impressive ceremonies of Lincoln's inauguration as President. A good description of the scene is given by Dr. J. G. Holland. "The morning broke beautifully clear, and it found General Scott and the Washington police in readiness. In the hearts of the surging crowds there was anxiety; but outside all looked as usual on such occasions, with the exception of an

extraordinary display of soldiers. The public buildings, the schools, and most of the places of business, were closed during the day, and the stars and stripes were floating from every flag-staff. There was a great desire to hear Lincoln's inaugural; and at an early hour Pennsylvania Avenue was full of people wending their way to the east front of the Capitol where it was to be delivered. As the Presidential party reached the platform erected for the ceremonies, Senator Baker of Oregon, one of Lincoln's old friends and political rivals in Illinois, introduced him to the assembly. There was not a very hearty welcome given to the President as he stepped forward to read his inaugural. The reading was listened to with profound attention, those passages which contained any allusion to the Union being vociferously cheered. None listened more carefully than Mr. Buchanan and Judge Taney, the latter of whom, with noticeable agitation, administered the oath of office to Mr. Lincoln when his address was ended."

Another eye-witness has described the dramatic scene, and the principal actors in it, in the following graphic paragraphs: "Near noon I found myself a member of the motley crowd gathered around the side entrance to Willard's Hotel. Soon an open barouche drove up, and the only occupant stepped out. A large, heavy, awkward-moving man, far advanced in years, short and thin gray hair, full face plentifully seamed and wrinkled, head curiously inclined to the left shoulder, a low-crowned, broad-brimmed silk hat, an immense white cravat like a poultice thrusting the old-fashioned standing collar up to the ears, dressed in black throughout, with swallow-tail coat not of the newest style. It was President Buchanan, calling to take his successor to the Capitol. In a few minutes he reappeared, with Mr. Lincoln on his arm; the

two took seats side by side, and the carriage rolled away, followed by a rather disorderly and certainly not very imposing procession. I had ample time to walk to the Capitol, and no difficulty in securing a place where everything could be seen and heard to the best advantage. The attendance at the inauguration was, they told me, unusually small; many being kept away by anticipated disturbance, as it had been rumored—not without good grounds—that General Scott himself was fearful of an outbreak, and had made all possible military preparations to meet the emergency. A square platform had been built out from the steps to the eastern portico, with benches for distinguished spectators on three sides. Senator Douglas, the only one I recognized, sat at the extreme end of the seat on the right of the narrow passage leading from the steps. There was no delay, and the gaunt form of the President-elect was soon visible, slowly making his way to the front. To me, at least, he was completely metamorphosed—partly by his own fault, and partly through the efforts of injudicious friends and ambitious tailors. He was raising (to gratify a very young lady, it is said) a crop of whiskers, of the blacking-brush variety, coarse, stiff, and ungraceful; and in so doing spoiled, or at least seriously impaired, a face which, though never handsome, had in its original state a peculiar power and pathos. On the present occasion the whiskers were reinforced by brand-new clothes from top to toe; black dress coat instead of the usual frock; black cloth or satin vest, black pantaloons, and a glossy hat evidently just out of the box. To cap the climax of novelty, he carried a huge ebony cane, with a gold head the size of an egg. In these, to him, strange habiliments, he looked so miserably uncomfortable that I could not help pitying him. Reaching the platform, his discomfort was visibly increased by

not knowing what to do with hat and cane; and so he stood there, the target for ten thousand eyes, holding his cane in one hand and his hat in the other, the picture of helpless embarrassment. After some hesitation, he pushed the cane into a corner of the railing, but could not find a place for the hat, except on the floor, where I could see he did not like to risk it. Douglas, who fully took in the situation, came to the rescue of his old friend and rival, and held the precious hat until the owner needed it again; a service which, if predicted two years before, would probably have astonished him. The oath of office was administered by Chief Justice Taney, whose black robes, attenuated figure, and cadaverous countenance reminded me of a galvanized corpse. Then the President came forward and read his inaugural address in a clear and distinct voice. It was attentively listened to by all; but the closest listener was Douglas, who leaned forward as if to catch every word, nodding his head emphatically at those passages which most pleased him. I must not forget to mention the presence of a Mephistopheles in the person of Senator Wigfall of Texas, who stood with folded arms leaning against the doorway of the Capitol, looking down upon the crowd and the ceremony with a contemptuous air which sufficiently indicated his opinion of the whole performance. To him, the Southern Confederacy was already an accomplished fact."

"Under the shadow of the great Eastern portico of the Capitol," says General John A. Logan, "with the retiring President and Cabinet, the Supreme Court Justices, the Foreign Diplomatic Corps, and hundreds of Senators, Representatives, and other distinguished persons filling the great platform on either side and behind them, Abraham Lincoln stood bareheaded before full thirty thousand people, upon whose uplifted faces the unveiled glory of the mild Spring sun now shone —



stood reverently before that far greater and mightier Presence termed by himself, 'My rightful masters, the American people'—and pleaded in a manly, earnest, and affectionate strain with 'such as were dissatisfied' to listen to the 'better angels' of their nature. 'Temperate, reasonable, kindly persuasive'—it seems strange that Lincoln's inaugural address did not disarm at least the personal resentment of the South toward him, and sufficiently strengthen Union-loving people there against the red-hot Secessionists, to put the 'brakes' down on rebellion."

The address was devoted almost exclusively to the great absorbing topic of the hour—the attempt of the Southern States to withdraw from the Union and erect an independent republic. The calm, firm, moderate, judicious spirit which pervaded Lincoln's address is apparent in the following quotations, which contain its most significant and memorable passages:

*Fellow-Citizens of the United States:*—In compliance with a custom as old as the Government itself, I appear before you to address you briefly, and to take in your presence the oath prescribed by the Constitution of the United States to be taken by the President "before he enters on the execution of his office." . . . Apprehension seems to exist among the people of the Southern States, that by the accession of a Republican Administration their property and their peace and personal security are to be endangered. There has never been any reasonable cause for such apprehension. Indeed, the most ample evidence to the contrary has all the while existed and been open to their inspection. It is found in nearly all the published speeches of him who now addresses you. I do but quote from one of those speeches when I declare that "I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists. I believe I

have no lawful right to do so, and I have no inclination to do so." Those who nominated and elected me did so with full knowledge that I had made this and many similar declarations, and have never recanted them. . . . I now reiterate these sentiments; and, in doing so, I only press upon the public attention the most conclusive evidence of which the case is susceptible, that the property, peace, and security of no section are to be in anywise endangered by the now incoming Administration. I add, too, that all the protection which, consistently with the Constitution and the laws, can be given, will be cheerfully given to all the States, when lawfully demanded, for whatever cause — as cheerfully to one section as to another. . . . I hold that, in contemplation of universal law, and of the Constitution, *the Union of these States is perpetual*. Perpetuity is implied, if not expressed, in the fundamental law of all National Governments. It is safe to assert that no Government proper ever had a provision in its organic law for its own termination. Continue to execute all the express provisions of our National Constitution, and the Union will endure forever. . . . I therefore consider that, in view of the Constitution and the laws, the Union is unbroken, and to the extent of my ability I shall take care, as the Constitution itself expressly enjoins upon me, that the laws of the Union be faithfully executed in all the States. Doing this I deem to be only a simple duty on my part; and I shall perform it, so far as practicable, unless my rightful masters, the American people, shall withhold the requisite means, or, in some authoritative manner, direct the contrary. I trust this will not be regarded as a menace, but only as the declared purpose of the Union that it will constitutionally defend and maintain itself. In doing this, there need be no bloodshed or violence; and there shall be none, unless it be forced upon the national authority. The power confided to me will be used to hold, occupy, and possess the property and places belonging to the Government, and to collect the duties

and imposts; but beyond what may be but necessary for these objects, there will be no invasion, no using of force against or among the people anywhere. . . . Physically speaking, we cannot separate. We cannot remove our respective sections from each other, nor build an impassable wall between them. A husband and wife may be divorced, and go out of the presence and beyond the reach of each other; but the different parts of our country cannot do this. They cannot but remain face to face; and intercourse, either amicable or hostile, must continue between them. It is impossible, then, to make that intercourse more advantageous or more satisfactory after separation than before. Can aliens make treaties easier than friends can make law? Can treaties be more faithfully enforced between aliens than laws can among friends? Suppose you go to war, you cannot fight always; and when, after much loss on both sides and no gain on either, you cease fighting, the identical old questions, as to terms of intercourse, are again upon you. . . . This country, with its institutions, belongs to the people who inhabit it. Whenever they shall grow weary of the existing Government, they can exercise their constitutional right of amending it, or their revolutionary right to dismember or overthrow it. I cannot be ignorant of the fact that many worthy and patriotic citizens are desirous of having the National Constitution amended. While I make no recommendation of amendments, I fully recognize the rightful authority of the people over the whole subject, to be exercised in either of the modes prescribed in the instrument itself; and I should, under existing circumstances, favor rather than oppose a fair opportunity being afforded the people to act upon it. . . . The Chief Magistrate derives all his authority from the people, and they have conferred none upon him to fix terms for the separation of the States. The people themselves can do this also, if they choose; but the Executive, as such, has nothing to do with it. His duty is to administer the present Government as it

came to his hands, and to transmit it, unimpaired by him, to his successor. . . . By the frame of the Government under which we live, the same people have wisely given their public servants but little power for mischief; and have, with equal wisdom, provided for the return of that little to their own hands at very short intervals. While the people retain their virtue and vigilance, no administration, by any extreme of wickedness or folly, can very seriously injure the Government in the short space of four years.

My countrymen, one and all, think calmly and well upon this whole subject. Nothing valuable can be lost by taking time. If there be an object to hurry any of you in hot haste to a step which you would never take deliberately, that object will be frustrated by taking time; but no good can be frustrated by it. Such of you as are now dissatisfied still have the old Constitution unimpaired, and, on the sensitive point, the laws of your own framing under it; while the new administration will have no immediate power, if it would, to change either. If it were admitted that you who are dissatisfied hold the right side in the dispute, there still is no single good reason for precipitate action. Intelligence, patriotism, Christianity, and a firm reliance on Him who has never yet forsaken this favored land, are still competent to adjust, in the best way, all our present difficulty.

In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow-countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The Government will not assail you. You can have no conflict without being yourselves the aggressors. You have no oath registered in heaven to destroy the Government; while I shall have the most solemn one to "preserve, protect, and defend" it.

I am loth to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break, our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and

hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature.

At the close of the address, which was delivered with the utmost earnestness and solemnity, Lincoln, "with reverent look and impressive emphasis, repeated the oath to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of his country. Douglas, who knew the conspirators and their plots, with patriotic magnanimity then grasped the hand of the President, gracefully extended his congratulations, and the assurance that in the dark future he would stand by him, and give to him his utmost aid in upholding the Constitution and enforcing the laws of his country."

"At the inauguration," says Congressman Riddle, "I stood within a yard of Mr. Lincoln when he pronounced his famous address. How full of life and power it then was, with the unction of his utterance! Surely, we thought, the South, which rejected the concessions of Congress, would accept him. How dry and quaint, yet ingenious, much of that inaugural appears to me now, when the life and soul seem to have gone out of it! A sad thing—a spectre of the day—will forever haunt my memory: Poor old President Buchanan, short, stout, pale, white-haired, yet bearing himself resolutely throughout, linked by the arm to the new President, into whom from himself was passing the qualifying unction of the Constitution, jostled hither and thither, as already out of men's sight, yet bravely maintaining the shadow of dignity and place. How glad he must have been to take leave of his successor at the White House when all was ended!"

The formalities of the inauguration concluded, Lincoln passed back through the Senate Chamber, and,

again escorted by Mr. Buchanan, was conducted to the White House, where the cares and anxieties of his position immediately descended upon him. "Strange indeed," says General Logan, "must have been the thoughts that crowded through the brain and oppressed the heart of Abraham Lincoln that night — his first at the White House. The City of Washington swarmed with rebels and rebel sympathizers, and all the departments of Government were honeycombed with treason and shadowed with treachery and espionage. Every step proposed or contemplated by the Government would be known to the so-called Government of the Confederate States almost as soon as thought of. All means to thwart and delay the carrying out of the Government's purposes that the excuses of routine and red tape admitted of would be used by the traitors within the camp to aid the traitors without. No one knew all this better than Mr. Lincoln. With no army, no navy, not even a revenue cutter left — with forts and arsenals, ammunition and arms, in possession of the South, with no money in the National Treasury, and the National credit blasted — the position must, even to his hopeful nature, have seemed desperate. Yet even in this awful hour, he was sustained by confidence in the good effects of his conciliatory message to the South, and by his trust in the patriotism of the people and the Providence of God."

Mr. Welles, the incoming Secretary of the Navy, in writing of the period immediately following the inauguration, says: "A strange state of things existed at that time in Washington. The atmosphere was thick with treason. Party spirit and old party differences prevailed amidst the accumulating dangers. Secession was considered by most persons as a political party question, not as rebellion. Democrats to a large extent sympathized with the Rebels more than with the

Administration. The Republicans, on the other hand, were scarcely less partisan and unreasonable . . . clamorous for the removal of all Democrats, indiscriminately, from office."

The President's first official act was the announcement of his Cabinet, which was composed of the following persons: William H. Seward, Secretary of State; Simon Cameron, Secretary of War; Salmon P. Chase, Secretary of the Treasury; Gideon Welles, Secretary of the Navy; Caleb B. Smith, Secretary of the Interior; Montgomery Blair, Postmaster General; and Edward Bates, Attorney General. Lincoln had selected these counselors with grave deliberation. In reply to the remonstrances urged, on political grounds, against the appointment of one or two of them, he had said: "The times are too grave and perilous for ambitious schemes and personal rivalries. I need the aid of all of these men. They enjoy the confidence of their several States and sections, and they will strengthen the administration." On another occasion he remarked: "It will require the utmost skill, influence, and sagacity of all of us, to save the country; let us forget ourselves, and join hands like brothers to save the Republic. If we succeed, there will be glory enough for all."

Speculations have been almost endless as to how the Cabinet came to be made up as it was. But the truth is, according to Secretary Welles, that it was practically made up in Springfield almost as soon as Lincoln found himself elected. In Lincoln's own words, as given by Mr. Welles: "On the day of the Presidential election the operator of the telegraph in Springfield placed his instrument at my disposal. I was there without leaving, after the returns began to come in, until we had enough to satisfy us how the election had gone. This was about two in the morning of Wednes-

day. I went home, but not to get much sleep; for I then felt, as I never had before, the responsibility that was upon me. I began at once to feel that I needed support,—others to share with me the burden. This was on Wednesday morning, and before the sun went down I had made up my Cabinet. It was almost the same that I finally appointed.”

The only two members of the Cabinet who served from the beginning to the end of Lincoln’s administration were Welles and Seward. Stanton was not appointed until January 13, 1862, succeeding Simon Cameron. Chase left the Treasury Department to become Chief Justice, and was succeeded in the Treasury Department by ex-Governor Fessenden of Vermont, who in his turn was succeeded by Hugh McCulloch. The Attorney General’s chair was filled successively by Bates and Speed. Caleb B. Smith was the first Secretary of the Interior, succeeded (January 1, 1863) by John P. Usher. The first Postmaster General was Montgomery Blair, who was followed (September 4, 1864) by ex-Governor Dennison of Ohio. The appointment that gave the greatest surprise of any in the Cabinet was that of Stanton as Secretary of War. Stanton had been in Buchanan’s cabinet as Attorney General. He had been outspoken, almost brutal, in his scornful hostility to Lincoln, and the appointment by him was as great a surprise to Stanton as his acceptance of it was to everyone. When asked, somewhat incredulously, what he would do as War Secretary Stanton replied, “*I will make Abe Lincoln President of the United States.*” Of the character of this remarkable man, Mr. Alonzo Rothschild, in his interesting study of the relations between Lincoln and Stanton (“Lincoln, Master of Men,” p. 229), says: “Intense earnestness marked Stanton’s every act. So sharply were all his faculties focused upon the purpose



of the hour that he is to be classed among the one-idea men of history. Whatever came between him and his goal encountered an iron will. . . . Quick to penetrate through the husks of fraud into the very nubbin of things, he was even more swiftly moved by relentless wrath to insist upon exposure and punishment. The brief career [as Attorney General] in Buchanan's cabinet had been long enough to demonstrate his almost savage hostility toward official dishonesty, as well as his moral courage to grapple with treason in high places. Above all, he evinced a loyalty to the Union that rose above the party creed of a lifetime — that might demand of him any sacrifice however great."

The first weeks of President Lincoln's residence in the Executive Mansion were occupied with the arduous work of selecting loyal and capable men for responsible positions in the Government service. The departments at Washington were filled with disloyal men, who used the means and influence pertaining to their places to aid the rebellious States. It was of vital importance that these faithless officials should be removed at the earliest moment, and their positions filled with men of tried integrity. Lincoln desired to appoint for this purpose stanch, competent, and trustworthy citizens, regardless of party distinctions. But the labor involved in this duty was enormous and exhausting. There was a multitude of vacant places, there were difficult questions to be considered in a majority of cases, and there was a host of applicants and their friends to be satisfied. Mr. Charles A. Dana relates a circumstance which hints at the troubles encountered by Lincoln in this province of his Presidential duties. "The first time I saw Mr. Lincoln," says Mr. Dana, "was shortly after his inauguration. He had appointed Mr. Seward to be his Secretary of State; and some of the Republican leaders of New York, who

had been instrumental in preventing Mr. Seward's nomination to the Presidency and in securing that of Mr. Lincoln, had begun to fear that they would be left out in the cold in the distribution of the offices. Accordingly several of them determined to go to Washington, and I was asked to go with them. We all went up to the White House together, except Mr. Stanton, who stayed away because he was himself an applicant for office. Mr. Lincoln received us in the large room upstairs in the east wing of the White House, where the President had his working office, and stood up while General Wadsworth, who was our principal spokesman, stated what was desired. After the interview was begun, a big Indianian, who was a messenger in attendance in the White House, came into the room and said to the President, 'She wants you.' 'Yes, yes,' said Mr. Lincoln, without stirring. Soon afterward the messenger returned again, exclaiming, 'I say she wants you.' The President was evidently annoyed, but instead of going out after the messenger he remarked to us: 'One side shall not gobble up everything. Make out a list of the places and men you want, and I will endeavor to apply the rule of give and take.' General Wadsworth answered: 'Our party will not be able to remain in Washington, but we will leave such a list with Mr. Carroll, and whatever he agrees to will be agreeable to us.' Mr. Lincoln continued, 'Let Mr. Carroll come in to-morrow, and we will see what can be done.'"

Lincoln was regarded with violent animosity by all who were in sympathy with the peculiar prejudices of the slave States. The inhabitants of the District of Columbia looked upon him with especial dislike. He was to them an odious embodiment of the abhorred principles of Abolitionism. As an illustration of this bitter feeling, Mr. Arnold narrates the following anecdote

dote: "A distinguished South Carolina lady — one of the Howards — the widow of a Northern scholar, called upon him out of curiosity. She was very proud and aristocratic, and was curious to see a man who had been represented to her as a monster, a mixture of the ape and the tiger. She was shown into the room where were Mr. Lincoln and Senators Seward, Hale, Chase, and other prominent members of Congress. As Mr. Seward, whom she knew, presented her to the President, she hissed in his ear: 'I am a South Carolinian.' Instantly reading her character, he turned and addressed her with the greatest courtesy, and dignified and gentlemanly politeness. After listening a few moments, astonished to find him so different from what he had been described to her, she said: 'Why, Mr. Lincoln, you look, act, and speak like a kind, good-hearted, generous man.' 'And did you expect to meet a savage?' said he. 'Certainly I did, or even something worse,' replied she. 'I am glad I have met you,' she continued, 'and now the best way to preserve peace is for you to go to Charleston and show the people what you are, and tell them you have no intention of injuring them.' Returning home, she found a party of Secessionists, and on entering the room she exclaimed, 'I have seen him! I have seen him!' 'Who?' they inquired. 'That terrible monster, Lincoln, and I found him a gentleman, and I am going to his first levee after his inauguration.' At his first reception, this tall daughter of South Carolina, dressing herself in black velvet, with two long white plumes in her hair, repaired to the White House. She was nearly six feet high, with black eyes and black hair, and in her velvet and white feathers she was a striking and majestic figure. As she approached the President he recognized her immediately. 'Here I am again,' said she, 'that South Carolinian.' 'I am glad to see you,' replied he, 'and

to assure you that the first object of my heart is to preserve peace, and I wish that not only you but every son and daughter of South Carolina were here, that I might tell them so.' Mr. Cameron, Secretary of War, came up, and after some remarks he said, 'South Carolina [which had already seceded] is the prodigal son.' 'Ah, Mr. Secretary,' said she, 'if South Carolina is the prodigal son, Uncle Sam, our father, ought to divide the inheritance, and let her go; but they say you are going to make war upon us; is it so?' 'Oh, come back,' said Lincoln, 'tell South Carolina to come back now, and we will kill the fatted calf.'"

The impression which Lincoln made on those who met him at the outset of his career as President, and their varied comments and descriptions, are matters of peculiar interest. At first, many people did not understand him—hardly knew what to make of a personality so unlike any they had ever seen in high places before. But he soon began to show those qualities of calm self-reliance, quickness to grasp the essential factors of a situation and readiness to meet it, courage, patience, firmness, breadth of view and kindness, practical tact and wisdom, which were a surprise to all who knew him, and are now seen to be but a rapid and logical unfolding, under the stimulus of his enormous responsibilities, of his great natural powers. The test had come, the crisis was upon him; and he met them marvelously well.

General W. T. Sherman contributes an interesting reminiscence at this point. "One day," says General Sherman, "my brother, Senator Sherman, took me with him to see Mr. Lincoln. We found the room full of people. Mr. Lincoln sat at the end of a table, talking with three or four gentlemen, who soon left. John walked up, shook hands, and took a chair near

him, holding in his hand some papers referring to minor appointments in the State of Ohio, which formed the subject of conversation. Mr. Lincoln took the papers, said he would refer them to the proper heads of departments, and would be glad to make the appointments asked for, if not already promised. John then turned to me, and said, 'Mr. President, this is my brother, Colonel Sherman, who is just up from Louisiana; he may give you some information you want.' 'Ah!' said Mr. Lincoln, 'how are they getting along down there?' I said, 'They think they are getting along swimmingly — they are preparing for war.' 'Oh, well!' said he, '*I guess we'll manage to keep house.*' I was silenced, said no more to him, and we soon left. I was sadly disappointed, and remember that I broke out on John, cursing the politicians generally, saying, 'You have got things in a —— of a fix, and you may get them out as best you can,' adding that the country was sleeping on a volcano that might burst forth at any minute, but that I was going to St. Louis to take care of my family, and would have no more to do with it. John begged me to be more patient, but I said I would not; that I had no time to wait, that I was off for St. Louis; and off I went."

The apartment which Lincoln used as an office in which to transact daily business and to receive informal visits was on the second floor of the White House. Its simple equipments are thus described by Mr. Arnold: "It was about twenty-five by forty feet in size. In the centre, on the west, was a large white marble fireplace, with big old-fashioned brass andirons, and a large and high brass fender. A wood fire was burning in cool weather. The large windows opened on the beautiful lawn to the south, with a view of the unfinished Washington Monument, the Smith-

sonian Institution, the Potomac, Alexandria, and on down the river toward Mt. Vernon. Across the Potomac were Arlington Heights and Arlington House, late the residence of Robert E. Lee. On the hills around, during nearly all Lincoln's administration, were the white tents of soldiers, field fortifications and camps, and in every direction could be seen the brilliant colors of the national flag. The furniture of this room consisted of a large oak table covered with cloth, extending north and south; and it was around this table that the Cabinet sat when it held its meetings. Near the end of the table, and between the windows, was another table, on the west side of which the President sat in a large armchair, and at this table he wrote. A tall desk with pigeon-holes for papers stood against the south wall. The only books usually found in this room were the Bible, the United States Statutes, and a copy of Shakespeare. There were a few chairs and two plain hair-covered sofas. There were two or three map frames, from which hung military maps on which the position and movements of the armies were traced. On the mantel was an old and discolored engraving of General Jackson and a later photograph of John Bright. Doors opened into this room from the room of the Secretary, and from the outside hall running east and west across the House. A bell cord within reach of his hand extended to the Secretary's office. A messenger who stood at the door opening from the hall took in the cards and names of visitors. Here, in this plain room, Lincoln spent most of his time while President. Here he received everyone, from the Chief Justice and Lieutenant-General to the private soldier and humblest citizen. Custom had fixed certain rules of precedence, and the order in which officials should be received. Members of the Cabinet and the high officers of the army and navy were gener-

ally promptly admitted. Senators and members of Congress were received in the order of their arrival. Sometimes there would be a crowd of them waiting their turn. While thus waiting, the loud ringing laugh of Mr. Lincoln would be heard by the waiting and impatient crowd. Here, day after day, often from early morning to late at night, Lincoln sat, listened, talked, and decided. He was patient, just, considerate, and hopeful. The people came to him as to a father. He saw everyone, and many wasted his precious time. Governors, Senators, Congressmen, officers, clergymen, bankers, merchants — all classes approached him with familiarity. This incessant labor, the study of the great problems he had to decide, the worry of constant importunity, the quarrels of officers of the army, the care, anxiety, and responsibility of his position, wore upon his vigorous frame.”

Mr. Ben. Perley Poore states that “the White House, while Mr. Lincoln occupied it, was a fertile field for news, which he was always ready to give those correspondents in whom he had confidence; but the surveillance of the press — first by Secretary Seward, and then by Secretary Stanton — was as annoying as it was inefficient. . . . Often when Mr. Lincoln was engaged, correspondents would send in their cards, bearing requests for some desired item of news or for the verification of some rumor. He would either come out and give the coveted information, or he would write it on the back of the card and send it to the owner. He wrote a legible hand, slowly and laboriously perfecting his sentences before he placed them on paper. The long epistles that he wrote to his generals he copied himself, not wishing anyone else to see them, and these copies were kept in pigeon-holes for reference. . . . Mr. Lincoln used to wear at the White

House in the morning, and after dinner, a long-skirted faded dressing-gown, belted around his waist, and slippers. His favorite attitude when listening — and he was a good listener — was to lean forward, and clasp his left knee with both hands, as if fondling it, and his face would then wear a sad and wearied look. But when the time came for him to give an opinion on what he had heard, or to tell a story which something ‘reminded him of,’ his face would lighten up with its homely, rugged smile, and he would run his fingers through his bristly black hair, which would stand out in every direction like that of an electric experiment doll.”

John G. Nicolay, afterward Lincoln’s private secretary, says: “The people beheld in the new President a man six feet four inches in height, a stature which of itself would be hailed in any assemblage as one of the outward signs of leadership; joined to this was a spare but muscular frame, and large strongly-marked features corresponding to his unusual stature. Quiet in demeanor but erect in bearing, his face even in repose was not unattractive; and when lit up by his open, genial smile, or illuminated in the utterance of a strong or stirring thought, his countenance was positively handsome. His voice, pitched in rather a high key, but of great clearness and penetration, made his public remarks audible to a wide circle of listeners.”

Henry Champion Deming says of Lincoln’s appearance at this time: “Conceive a tall and giant figure, more than six feet in height, not only unencumbered with superfluous flesh, but reduced to the minimum working standard of cord and sinew and muscle, strong and indurated by exposure and toil, with legs and arms long and attenuated, but not disproportionately to the long and attenuated trunk; in posture and carriage not ungraceful, but with the grace of unstudied



and careless ease rather than of cultivated airs and high-bred pretensions. His dress is uniformly of black throughout, and would attract but little attention in a well-dressed circle, if it hung less loosely upon him, and if the ample white shirt collar were not turned over his cravat in Western style. The face that surmounts this figure is half Roman and half Indian, bronzed by climate, furrowed by life struggles, seamed with humor; the head is massive and covered with dark, thick, and unmanageable hair; the brow is wide and well developed, the nose large and fleshy, the lips full, cheeks thin and drawn down in strong, corded lines, which, but for the wiry whiskers, would disclose the machinery which moves the broad jaw. The eyes are dark gray, sunk in deep sockets, but bright, soft and beautiful in expression, sometimes lost and half abstracted, as if their glance was reversed and turned inward, or as if the soul which lighted them was far away. The teeth are white and regular, and it is only when a smile, radiant, captivating, and winning as was ever given to mortal, transfigures the plain countenance, that you begin to realize that it is not impossible for artists to admire and women to love it."

Mr. John Bigelow, who was appointed consul to Paris in 1861, and was afterwards minister to France, describes in his "Retrospections of an Active Life" his first visit to Lincoln and the impressions gained by him at that early period in Lincoln's official career. "The day following my arrival in Washington Preston King, Senator from New York, invited me to go with him to be presented to President Lincoln, an invitation which of course I embraced with alacrity; for as yet I had not met him, and knew him only by his famous senatorial campaign against Douglas in Illinois and the masterly address which he delivered at the Cooper Institute shortly before his nomination in

New York. . . . The new President received us in his private room at an early hour of the morning; another gentleman was with him at the time, a member of the Senate, I believe. We were with him from a half to three-quarters of an hour. The conversation, in which I took little or no part, turned upon the operations in the field. I observed no sign of weakness in anything the President said; neither did I hear anything that particularly impressed me, which, under the circumstances, was not surprising. What did impress me, however, was what I can only describe as a certain lack of sovereignty. He seemed to me, nor was it in the least strange that he did, like a man utterly unconscious of the space which the President of the United States occupied that day in the history of the human race, and of the vast power for the exercise of which he had become personally responsible. This impression was strengthened by Mr. Lincoln's modest habit of disclaiming knowledge of affairs and familiarity with duties, and frequent avowals of ignorance, which, even where it exists, it is as well for a captain as far as possible to conceal from the public. The authority of an executive officer largely consists in what his constituents think it is. Up to that time Mr. Lincoln had had few opportunities of showing the nation the qualities which won all hearts and made him one of the most conspicuous and enduring historic characters of the century."

Some uncommonly vivid "first impressions" of Lincoln are given in the Journals of Ralph Waldo Emerson, who early in February of 1862 made a visit to Washington for the purpose of delivering a lecture before the Smithsonian Institution—a lecture which Lincoln is said to have attended. A day or two afterwards Emerson was taken by Senator Sumner of Massachusetts to call at the White House. "The

President impressed me," says Emerson, "more favorably than I had hoped. A frank, sincere, well-meaning man, with a lawyer's habit of mind, good clear statement of his facts; correct enough, not vulgar, as described, but with a sort of boyish cheerfulness, or that kind of sincerity and jolly good meaning that our class-meetings on Commencement Days show, in telling our old stories over. When he has made his remark he looks up at you with great satisfaction, and shows all his white teeth, and laughs. . . . When I was introduced to him he said, 'Oh, Mr. Emerson, I once heard you say in a lecture that a Kentuckian seems to say by his air and manners, "Here am I; if you don't like me, the worse for you."'" (The point of this of course is that Lincoln was himself a Kentuckian.) A day or two later Emerson again called on the President, this time in the company of Secretary Seward. It being Sunday evening, Seward asked the President if he had been to church, to which the latter answered that he had not—that he had been reading, for the first time, Senator Sumner's speech in the Senate on the Trent affair. This was followed by some general conversation on the Trent affair, in which the President expressed his gratification at the friendly attitude taken in the matter by France and Spain.

Private Secretary Hay thus writes of Lincoln's character and disposition: "All agree that the most marked characteristic of Mr. Lincoln's manners was his simplicity and artlessness; this immediately impressed itself upon the observation of those who met him for the first time, and each successive interview deepened the impression. People seemed delighted to find in the ruler of the nation freedom from pomposity and affectation, mingled with a certain simple dignity which never forsook him. Though oppressed with the

weight of responsibility resting upon him as President of the United States, he shrank from assuming any of the honors, or even the titles, of the position. After years of intimate acquaintance with Mr. Lincoln, the writer cannot now recall a single instance in which he spoke of himself as President, or used that title for himself except when acting in an official capacity. He always spoke of his position and office vaguely, as, 'this place,' 'here,' or other modest phrase. Once, speaking of the room in the Capitol used by the Presidents of the United States during the close of a session of Congress, he said, 'That room, you know, that they call'—dropping his voice and hesitating—'the President's room.' To an intimate friend who addressed him always by his own proper title, he said, 'Now call me Lincoln, and I'll promise not to tell of the breach of etiquette—if *you* won't—and I shall have a resting-spell from "Mister President."'

With all his simplicity and unacquaintance with courtly manners, his native dignity never forsook him in the presence of critical polished strangers; but mixed with his angularities and *bonhomie* was something which spoke the fine fiber of the man; and while his sovereign disregard of courtly conventionalities was somewhat ludicrous, his native sweetness and straightforwardness of manner served to disarm criticism and impress the visitor that he was before a man pure, self-poised, collected, and strong in unconscious strength. Of him, an accomplished foreigner, whose knowledge of the courts was more perfect than that of the English language, said, 'He seems to me one grand *gentilhomme* in disguise.'"

Mr. Hay adds that Lincoln's simplicity of manner "was marked in his total lack of consideration of what was due his exalted station. He had an almost morbid dread of what he called 'a scene'—that is, a demonstration of applause, such as always

greeted his appearance in public. The first sign of a cheer sobered him; he appeared sad and oppressed, suspended conversation, and looked out into vacancy; and when it was over, resumed the conversation just where it was interrupted, with an obvious feeling of relief. . . . Speaking of an early acquaintance who was an applicant for an office which he thought him hardly qualified to fill, the President said, 'Well, now, I never thought M—— had any more than average ability, when we were young men together; really I did not.' [A pause.] 'But, then, I suppose he thought just the same about me; he had reason to, and — here I am!'

General Carl Schurz says: "In the White House, as in his simple home in Springfield, Mr. Lincoln was the same plain, unaffected, unpretentious citizen. He won the admiration and affection of even the most punctilious of the foreign diplomats by the tenderness of his nature and the touching simplicity of his demeanor. . . . He was, in mind and heart, the very highest type of development of a plain man. He was a born leader of men, and the qualities that made him a leader were of the plain, common-sense type. . . . Lincoln had one great advantage over all the chief statesmen of his day. He had a thorough knowledge of the plain people. He knew their habits, their modes of thought, their unfailing sense of justice and right. He relied upon the popular feeling, in great measure, for his guidance."

Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe said of the qualities which Lincoln exhibited in the White House: "Lincoln is a strong man, but his strength is of a peculiar kind; it is not aggressive so much as passive; and among passive things, it is like the strength not so much of a stone buttress as of a wire cable. It is strength swaying to every influence, yielding on this side and on that, to popular needs, yet tenaciously

and inflexibly bound to carry its great end. . . . Slow and careful in coming to resolutions, willing to talk with every person who has anything to show on any side of a disputed subject, long in weighing and pondering, attached to constitutional limits and time-honored landmarks, Lincoln certainly was the *safest* leader a nation could have at a time when the *habeas corpus* must be suspended and all the constitutional and minor rights of citizens be thrown into the hands of their military leader. A reckless, bold, theorizing, dashing man of genius might have wrecked our Constitution and ended us in a splendid military despotism."

The fear lest the virulent enemies of the administration should attempt to assassinate Lincoln was so wide-spread that military measures were enforced to protect him from secret assault. General Charles P. Stone, to whom the duty was entrusted of establishing the necessary precautions, has furnished a brief report on the subject. "From the first," says General Stone, "I took, under the orders of the General-in-chief, especial care in guarding the Executive Mansion — without, however, doing it so ostentatiously as to attract public attention. It was not considered advisable that it should appear that the President of the United States was, for his personal safety, obliged to surround himself by armed guards. Mr. Lincoln was not consulted in the matter. But Captain Todd, formerly an officer of the regular army, who was, I believe, the brother-in-law of Mr. Lincoln, was then residing in the Presidential Mansion, and with him I was daily and nightly in communication, in order that in case of danger one person in the President's household should know where to find the main body of the guard, to the officer commanding which Captain Todd was each night introduced. Double sentries were

placed in the shrubbery all around the mansion, and the main body of the guard was posted in a vacant basement-room, from which a staircase led to the upper floors. A person entering by the main gate and walking up to the front door of the Executive Mansion during the night could see no sign of a guard; but from the moment anyone entered the grounds by any entrance, he was under the view of at least two riflemen standing silent in the shrubbery, and any suspicious movement on his part would have caused his immediate arrest; while inside, the call of Captain Todd would have been promptly answered by armed men. The precautions were taken before Fort Sumter was fired on, as well as afterward. One night near midnight," continues General Stone, "I entered the grounds for the purpose of inspecting the guard, and was surprised to see a bright light in the East room. As I entered the basement I heard a loud noise, as of many voices talking loudly, mingled with the ringing of arms, coming from the great reception room. On questioning the commander of the guard, I learned that many gentlemen had entered the house at a late hour, but they had come in boldly; no objection had been made from within, but on the contrary Captain Todd had told him all was right. I ascended the interior staircase and entered the East room, where I found more than fifty men, among whom were Hon. Cassius M. Clay and General Lane. All were armed with muskets, which they were generally examining, and it was the ringing of many rammers in the musket barrels which had caused the noise I had heard. Mr. Clay informed me that he and a large number of political friends, *deeming it very improper that the President's person should in such times be unguarded*, had formed a voluntary guard which would remain there every night and see to it that Mr. Lincoln was well

protected. I applauded the good spirit exhibited, but did not, however, cease the posting of the outside guards, nor the nightly inspections myself as before, until the time came when others than myself became responsible for the safety of the President."

It is stated that Lincoln "had an almost morbid dislike to an escort, or guard, and daily exposed himself to the deadly aim of an assassin." To the remonstrances of friends, who feared his constant exposure to danger, he had but one answer: "If they kill me, the next man will be just as bad for them; and in a country like this, where our habits are simple, and must be, assassination is always possible, and will come if they are determined upon it." A cavalry guard was once placed at the gates of the White House for a while, and Lincoln said that he "worried until he got rid of it." He once remarked to Colonel Halpine: "It would never do for a President to have guards with drawn sabers at his door, as if he fancied he were, or were trying to be, or were assuming to be, an emperor." While the President's family were at their summer-house, near Washington, he rode into town of a morning, or out at night, attended by a mounted escort; but if he returned to town for a while after dark, he rode in unguarded, and often alone, in his open carriage. On more than one occasion, the same writer tells us, he "has gone through the streets of Washington at a late hour of the night with the President, without escort, or even the company of a servant, walking all the way, going and returning. Considering the many open and secret threats to take his life, it is not surprising that Lincoln had many thoughts about his coming to a sudden and violent end. He once said that he felt the force of the expression, 'To take one's life in his hand'; but that he would not like to face death suddenly. He said that



he thought himself a great coward physically, and was sure that he would make a poor soldier, for unless there was something inspiring in the excitement of a battle he was sure that he would drop his gun and run at the first symptom of danger. That was said sportively, and he added, 'Moral cowardice is something which I think I never had.' "

## CHAPTER XVI

Civil War — Uprising of the Nation — The President's First Call for Troops — Response of the Loyal North — The Riots in Baltimore — Loyalty of Stephen A. Douglas — Douglas's Death — Blockade of Southern Ports — Additional War Measures — Lincoln Defines the Policy of the Government — His Conciliatory Course — His Desire to Save Kentucky — The President's First Message to Congress — Gathering of Troops in Washington — Reviews and Parades — Disaster at Bull Run — The President Visits the Army — Good Advice to an Angry Officer — A Peculiar Cabinet Meeting — Dark Days for Lincoln — A "Black Mood" in the White House — Lincoln's Unflinching Courage — Relief in Story-telling — A Pretty Good Land Title — "Measuring up" with Charles Sumner — General Scott "Unable as a Politician" — A Good Drawing-plaster — The New York Millionaires who Wanted a Gunboat — A Good Bridge-builder — A Sick Lot of Office-seekers.

THE Confederate attack upon Fort Sumter — a United States fort situated at the mouth of Charleston Harbor, South Carolina — April 12, 1861, was the signal that civil war had actually begun. Lincoln had thus far maintained a conciliatory policy toward the States in rebellion, hoping to the last that good sense and reason prevailing over rash and violent impulses would induce them to resume their allegiance to the Government. Their resort to arms and capture of forts and property of the United States decided the course of the administration; and on the 15th of April — forty-two days after his accession to the Presidency — Lincoln issued a proclamation asking for the immediate enlistment of 75,000 volunteers,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This first call for troops was supplemented a month later (May 16) by a call for 42,034 volunteers for three years, for 22,114 officers and men for the regular army, and 18,000 seamen for the navy.

and summoning Congress to convene in an extra session on the 4th of July. The call was sent forth in the following form:

### PROCLAMATION.

*By the President of the United States.*

WHEREAS, the laws of the United States have been for some time past and now are opposed and the execution thereof obstructed in the States of South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Florida, Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas, by combinations too powerful to be suppressed by the ordinary course of judicial proceedings, or by the powers vested in the marshals by law; now, therefore, I, ABRAHAM LINCOLN, President of the United States, in virtue of the power in me vested by the Constitution and the laws, have thought fit to call forth, and hereby do call forth, the militia of the several States of the Union, to the aggregate number of seventy-five thousand, in order to suppress said combinations and to cause the laws to be duly executed.

The details of this object will be immediately communicated to the State authorities through the War Department. I appeal to all loyal citizens to favor, facilitate, and aid this effort to maintain the honor, the integrity and existence of our National Union, and the perpetuity of popular government, and to redress wrongs already long enough endured. I deem it proper to say that the first service assigned to the forces hereby called forth will probably be to repossess the forts, places, and property which have been seized from the Union; and in every event the utmost care will be observed, consistently with the objects aforesaid, to avoid any devastation, any destruction of, or interference with, property, or any disturbance of peaceful citizens of any part of the country; and I hereby command the persons composing the combinations

aforesaid to disperse and retire peaceably to their respective abodes, within twenty days from this date.

Deeming that the present condition of public affairs presents an extraordinary occasion, I do hereby, in virtue of the power in me vested by the Constitution, convene both Houses of Congress. The Senators and Representatives are, therefore, summoned to assemble at their respective chambers, at twelve o'clock, noon, on Thursday, the fourth day of July next, then and there to consider and determine such measures as, in their wisdom, the public safety and interest may seem to demand.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the City of Washington, this fifteenth day of April, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-one, and of the independence of the United States the eighty-fifth.

*By the President,* ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

WILLIAM H. SEWARD, Secretary of State.

The issue of this proclamation created the wildest enthusiasm throughout the North. Scarcely a voice was raised against it, as it was seen to be a measure of absolute necessity and of self-defense on the part of the Government. "Every Northern State," says Mr. Henry I. Raymond, "responded promptly to the President's demand, and from private persons, as well as by the Legislatures, men, arms, and money were offered in unstinted profusion, and with the most zealous alacrity, in support of the Government. Massachusetts was first in the field, and on the first day after the issue of the proclamation her Sixth regiment, completely equipped, started from Boston for the national capital. Two more regiments were also made ready, and took their departure within forty-eight hours."

The Sixth Massachusetts regiment was attacked on its way to Washington, on the 19th of April, by a mob in Baltimore, carrying a Confederate flag, and several of its members were killed or severely wounded. "This," continues Mr. Raymond, "inflamed to a still higher point the excitement which already pervaded the country. The whole Northern section of the Union felt outraged that troops should be assailed and murdered on their way to protect the capital of the nation. In Maryland, where the secession party was strong, there was also great excitement, and the Governor of the State and the Mayor of Baltimore united in urging, for prudential reasons, that no more troops should be brought through that city." In answer to the remonstrances of Governor Hicks and a committee from Maryland, who presented their petition in person, Lincoln, intent on avoiding every cause of offense, and with a forbearance that now seems incredible, replied: "Troops must be brought here; but I make no point of bringing them through Baltimore. Without any military knowledge myself, of course I must leave details to General Scott. He hastily said this morning, in the presence of these gentlemen, 'March them around Baltimore, and not through it.' I sincerely hope the General, on fuller reflection, will consider this practical and proper, and that you will not object to it. By this, a collision of the people of Baltimore with the troops will be avoided, unless they go out of their way to seek it. I hope you will exert your influence to prevent this. Now and ever, I shall do all in my power for peace, consistently with the maintenance of the Government."

One of the most encouraging incidents of this opening chapter of the war was the announcement that Stephen A. Douglas, the great leader of the Democracy and the life-long political opponent of Lincoln, had

declared his purpose to stand by the Government. The effect of this action, at this crisis, was most salutary; it ranged the Northern Democrats with the defenders of the Union, and gave Lincoln a united North as the act of no other individual could have done. From that time until his death Douglas never faltered in his loyalty, and stood by the Government with a zeal and patriotism which were above all lower considerations of person or of party. On Sunday, the 14th of April, when Washington was thrilling with excitement over the fall of Fort Sumter, Douglas called on the President and after a brief conversation authorized a statement to be telegraphed throughout the country that he was "fully prepared to sustain the President in the exercise of all his Constitutional functions, to preserve the Union, maintain the Government, and defend the Federal capital. A firm policy and prompt action were necessary. The capital was in danger, and must be defended at all hazards, and at any expense of men and money." Faithful to his pledge, Douglas immediately set out upon a tour through the Northwest, to strengthen, by his words and presence, the spirit of loyalty among the people. He made a series of eloquent speeches on his journey to Chicago, where he arrived worn and spent with the fatigue and excitement of his undertaking. It was the last and noblest service of his life. Illness ensued, and after a few weeks of suffering he passed away, June 3, at the age of forty-eight. His death was an irreparable loss, mourned by the President and the nation.

The President's call for troops was succeeded on the 19th of April by a proclamation declaring a blockade of Southern ports. The text of this document is historically important, as definitely formulating the attitude and policy of the Government.

## EVERY-DAY LIFE OF LINCOLN 317

*Whereas*, An insurrection against the Government of the United States has broken out in the States of South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Florida, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas, and the laws of the United States for the collection of the revenue cannot be efficiently executed therein, conformably to that provision of the Constitution which requires duties to be uniform throughout the United States:

*And whereas*, A combination of persons, engaged in such insurrection, have threatened to grant pretended letters of marque to authorize the bearers thereof to commit assaults on the lives, vessels, and property of good citizens of the country lawfully engaged in commerce on the high seas, and in waters of the United States:

*And whereas*, An Executive Proclamation has already been issued, requiring the persons engaged in these disorderly proceedings to desist therefrom, calling out a militia force for the purpose of repressing the same, and convening Congress in extraordinary session to deliberate and determine thereon:

Now, therefore, I, ABRAHAM LINCOLN, President of the United States, with a view to the same purposes before mentioned, and to the protection of the public peace, and the lives and property of quiet and orderly citizens pursuing their lawful occupations, until Congress shall have assembled and deliberated on the said unlawful proceedings, or until the same shall have ceased, have further deemed it advisable to set on foot a blockade of the ports within the States aforesaid, in pursuance of the laws of the United States, and of the laws of nations in such cases provided. For this purpose a competent force will be posted so as to prevent entrance and exit of vessels from the ports aforesaid. If, therefore, with a view to violate such blockade, a vessel shall approach or shall attempt to leave any of the said ports, she shall be duly warned by the commander of one of the blockading vessels,

who shall indorse on her register the fact and date of such warning; and if the same vessel shall again attempt to enter or leave the blockaded port, she will be captured and sent to the nearest convenient port, for such proceedings against her and her cargo, as prize, as may be deemed advisable.

And I hereby proclaim and declare, that if any person, under the pretended authority of said States, or under any other pretense, shall molest a vessel of the United States, or the persons or cargo on board of her, such person will be held amenable to the laws of the United States for the prevention and punishment of piracy.

*By the President,* ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

WILLIAM H. SEWARD, Secretary of State.

WASHINGTON, April 19, 1861.

On the 27th of April the President issued a proclamation by which the blockade of Southern ports was extended to the ports of North Carolina and Virginia. And on the 16th of May, by another proclamation, the President directed the commander of the United States forces in Florida to "permit no person to exercise any office or authority upon the islands of Key West, Tortugas, and Santa Rosa, which may be inconsistent with the laws and Constitution of the United States; authorizing him, at the same time, if he shall find it necessary, to suspend the writ of *habeas corpus*, and to remove from the vicinity of the United States fortresses all dangerous and suspected persons."

The Virginia Convention which passed the ordinance of secession (April 17) having appointed a committee to wait upon the President and "respectfully ask him to communicate to this Convention the policy which the Federal Executive intends to pursue in regard to the Confederate States," Lincoln in reply



thus clearly outlined the policy and purposes of the Government:

In answer I have to say, that having at the beginning of my official term expressed my intended policy as plainly as I was able, it is with deep regret and mortification I now learn there is great and injurious uncertainty in the public mind as to what that policy is and what course I intend to pursue. Not having as yet seen occasion to change, it is now my purpose to pursue the course marked out in the Inaugural Address. I commend a careful consideration of the whole document as the best expression I can give to my purposes. As I then and therein said, I now repeat: "The power confided in me will be used to hold, occupy, and possess property and places belonging to the Government, and to collect the duties and imposts; but beyond what is necessary for these objects there will be no invasion, no using of force against or among the people anywhere." By the words "property and places belonging to the Government," I chiefly allude to the military posts and property which were in possession of the Government when it came into my hands. But if, as now appears to be true, in pursuit of a purpose to drive the United States authority from these places, an unprovoked assault has been made upon Fort Sumter, I shall hold myself at liberty to repossess, if I can, like places which had been seized before the Government was devolved upon me; and in any event I shall, to the best of my ability, repel force by force. In case it proves true that Fort Sumter has been assaulted, as is reported, I shall, perhaps, cause the United States mails to be withdrawn from all the States which claim to have seceded, believing that the commencement of actual war against the Government justifies and possibly demands it. I scarcely need to say that I consider the military posts and property situated within the States which claim to have seceded, as yet belonging to the Government

of the United States as much as they did before the supposed secession. Whatever else I may do for the purpose, I shall not attempt to collect the duties and imposts by any armed invasion of any part of the country; not meaning by this, however, that I may not land a force deemed necessary to relieve a fort upon the border of the country. From the fact that I have quoted a part of the Inaugural Address, it must not be inferred that I repudiate any other part, the whole of which I reaffirm, except so far as what I now say of the mails may be regarded as a modification.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

In the early period of Lincoln's administration he was hopeful that many serious phases of the threatened trouble might be averted, and that the better judgment of the citizens of the South might prevail. "For more than a month after his inauguration," says Secretary Welles, "President Lincoln indulged the hope, I may say felt a strong confidence, that Virginia would not secede but would adhere to the Union. . . . That there should be no cause of offense, no step that would precipitate or justify secession, he enjoined forbearance from all unnecessary exercise of political party authority." But he was very decided and determined as to what his duty was and what his action would be if the secessionists and disunionists pressed their case. He said: "The disunionists did not want me to take the oath of office. I have taken it, and I intend to administer the office for the benefit of the people, in accordance with the Constitution and the law." He was especially anxious that Kentucky should not be plunged into a rebellious war, as he saw that this State would be of the utmost importance to the Union cause. Soon after the bombardment of Fort Sumter a conference was held between the President and a number of prominent Kentuckians then

in Washington, at which Lincoln expressed himself in the most earnest words. Kentucky, he declared, "must not be precipitated into secession. She is the key to the situation. With her faithful to the Union, the discord in the other States will come to an end. She is now in the hands of those who do not represent the people. The sentiment of her State officials must be counteracted. We must arouse the young men of the State to action for the Union. We must know what men in Kentucky have the confidence of the people, and who can be relied on for good judgment, that they may be brought to the support of the Government at once." He paid a high tribute to the patriotism of the Southern men who had stood up against secession. "But," said he, "they are, as a rule, beyond the meridian of life, and their counsel and example do not operate quickly, if at all, on the excitable nature of young men who become inflamed by the preparations for war, and who in such a war as this will be, if it goes on, are apt to go in on the side that gives the first opportunity. The young men must not be permitted to drift away from us. I know that the men who voted against me in Kentucky will not permit this Government to be swept away by any such issue as that framed by the disunionists."

As Mr. Markland, a prominent Kentuckian, relates, in his reminiscences of the period: "Immediately a campaign for the Union was begun in Kentucky. The State could not be dragooned into open secession, therefore the neutrality policy was adopted. That policy was more rigidly observed by Mr. Lincoln than it was by his opponents, but he was not misled by it. Judge Joseph Holt made eloquent appeals for the Union through the columns of the press and from the forum, as did the Speeds, the Goodloes, and many others of prominence. Rousseau, Jacobs, Pound-

baker, and others, stood guard in the Legislature, and by their eloquence stayed the tide of disunion there. The labors of Judge Holt, the Speeds, the Goodloes, Cassius M. Clay, and their followers, had brought forth fruit for the Union. The patriotic men in the Legislature had done their work well. The men in the camps on the north side of the Ohio river moved over into Kentucky, and the invasion of Confederates which was to sweep Kentucky into secession was at an end. Kentucky was saved to the Union by the wise counsel and pacific policy of Abraham Lincoln."

A special session of Congress convened on the 4th of July, in obedience to the summons of the President in his proclamation of April 15. The following day the message of the Executive rehearsed to the joint Houses the circumstances which had rendered their assembling necessary. It portrayed in clear and succinct words the situation of affairs, the aggressive acts of the States aiming to disrupt the Federal Union, and the measures adopted by the administration to frustrate their attempts. The assailants of the Government, said the President, "have forced upon the country the distinct issue, 'immediate dissolution or blood.' And this issue embraces more than the fate of these United States. It presents to the whole family of man the question whether a constitutional Republic or Democracy — a Government of the people by the same people — can or cannot maintain its territorial integrity against its own domestic foes. It presents the question whether discontented individuals, too few in numbers to control administration according to organic law in any case, can always, upon the pretenses made in this case, or on any other pretenses, or arbitrarily, without any pretense, break up their Government, and thus practically put an end to free government upon the earth. It forces us to ask,

‘Is there, in all Republics, this inherent and fatal weakness? Must a Government, of necessity, be too strong for the liberties of its own people, or too weak to maintain its own existence?’” The message requested of Congress “the legal means for making this contest a short and decisive one; that you place at the control of the Government, for the work, at least four hundred thousand men and \$400,000,000. That number of men is about one-tenth of those of proper ages within the regions where, apparently, all are willing to engage; and the sum is less than a twenty-third part of the money value owned by the men who seem ready to devote the whole. A debt of \$600,000,000 now is a less sum per head than was the debt of our Revolution when we came out of that struggle; and the money value in the country now bears even a greater proportion to what it was then than does the population. Surely each man has as strong a motive now to preserve our liberties as each had then to establish them.” The message dwelt upon the encouraging facts “that the free institutions we enjoy have developed the powers and improved the condition of our whole people beyond any example in the world. Of this we now have a striking and an impressive illustration. So large an army as the Government has now on foot was never before known without a soldier in it but had taken his place there of his own free choice. But more than this; there are many single regiments whose members, one and another, possess full practical knowledge of all the arts, sciences, professions, and whatever else, whether useful or elegant, is known in the world; and there is scarcely one from which there could not be selected a President, a Cabinet, a Congress, and perhaps a Court, abundantly competent to administer the Government itself.” Finally, and eloquently, the message demonstrated the

significance of the war in its effect upon the liberties and prayers of all mankind. This message again illustrates Lincoln's singular power of stating clearly and convincingly the nature and exigencies of the struggle for the Preservation of the Union. Said he:

This is essentially a people's contest. On the side of the Union it is a struggle for maintaining in the world that form and substance of government whose leading object is to elevate the condition of men; to lift artificial weights from all shoulders; to clear the paths of laudable pursuits for all; to afford all an unfettered start and a fair chance in the race of life. Yielding to partial and temporary departures, from necessity, this is the leading object of the Government for whose existence we contend. I am most happy to believe that the plain people understand and appreciate this. It is worthy of note that while, in this the Government's hour of trial, large numbers of those in the army and navy who have been favored with the offices have resigned and proved false to the hand which had pampered them, not one common soldier or common sailor is known to have deserted his flag. Great honor is due to those officers who remained true, despite the example of their treacherous associates; but the greatest honor, and most important fact of all, is the unanimous firmness of the common soldiers and common sailors. To the last man, so far as known, they have successfully resisted the traitorous efforts of those whose commands but an hour before they obeyed as absolute law. This is the patriotic instinct of plain people. They understand, without an argument, that destroying the Government which was made by Washington means no good to them. Our popular Government has often been called an experiment. Two points in it our people have already settled — the successful establishing and the successful administering of it. One still remains — its successful

maintenance against a formidable internal attempt to overthrow it. It is now for them to demonstrate to the world that those who can fairly carry an election can also suppress a rebellion; that ballots are the rightful and peaceful successors of bullets; and that when ballots have fairly and constitutionally decided, there can be no successful appeal back to bullets; that there can be no successful appeal, except to ballots themselves, at succeeding elections. Such will be a great lesson of peace: teaching men that what they cannot take by an election, neither can they take by a war; teaching all the folly of being the beginners of a war.

Through the early summer of 1861 Washington was alive with preparations for a military movement against the enemy in Virginia. Troops from the North were constantly arriving, and as rapidly as possible were assigned to different organizations and drilled in the art of war. "Few comparatively know or can appreciate the actual condition of things and the state of feeling of the members of the Administration in those days," says Secretary Welles. "Nearly sixty years of peace had unfitted us for any war; but the most terrible of all wars, a civil war, was upon us, and it had to be met. Congress had adjourned without making any provision for the storm, though aware it was at hand and soon to burst upon the country. A new Administration, its members scarcely acquainted with each other, and differing essentially in the past, was compelled to act, promptly and decisively." The burden upon the President began to grow tremendous; but he did not shrink or falter.

Upon his back a more than Atlas-load,  
 The burden of the Commonwealth, was laid;  
 He stooped, and rose up to it, though the road  
 Shot suddenly downwards, not a whit dismayed.

He labored incessantly in urging forward the preparations for the great struggle which, however he might regret it, he now saw was inevitable. He was in daily conference with the officers of the army and of the War Department, and was present at innumerable reviews and parades of the soldiers. The 4th of July was memorable for a grand review of all the New York troops in and about the city. It was a brilliant and impressive scene. Says a spectator, Hon. A. G. Riddle: "As they swept past — twenty-five thousand boys in blue — their muskets flashing, bands playing, and banners waving, I stood near a distinguished group surrounding the President, and noted his countenance as he turned to the massive moving column. All about him were excited, confident, exultant. He stood silent, pale, profoundly sad, as though his prophetic soul saw what was to follow. He seemed to be gazing beyond the splendid pageant before him, upon things hidden from other eyes. Was there presaged to him a vision of that grander review of our victorious armies at the close of the war, which he was not to see?"

A few days later, all the troops in Washington crossed the Long Bridge and marched, gallant and exultant, straight toward the enemy in Virginia. The advance of our army resulted, on the 21st of July, in the shameful disaster at Bull Run. The North was filled with surprise and dismay, and even the stoutest hearts were burdened with anxiety for the future. Lincoln at first shared somewhat in the general depression, but his elastic spirits quickly rallied from the shock. Three or four days after the battle, some gentlemen who had been on the field called upon him. He inquired very minutely regarding all the circumstances of the affair, and after listening with the utmost attention, said, with a touch of humor: "So it's



your notion that we *whipped the rebels*, and then *ran away from them!*" Not long after this, the President made a personal visit to the army in Virginia. General Sherman, at that time connected with the Army of the Potomac, says: "I was near the river-bank, looking at a block-house which had been built for the defense of the aqueduct, when I saw a carriage coming by the road that crossed the Potomac river at Georgetown by a ferry. I thought I recognized in the carriage the person of President Lincoln. I hurried across a bend, so as to stand by the roadside as the carriage passed. I was in uniform, with a sword on, and was recognized by Mr. Lincoln and Mr. Seward, who rode side by side in an open hack. I inquired if they were going to my camp, and Mr. Lincoln said: 'Yes; we heard that you had got over the big scare, and we thought we would come over and see the boys.' The roads had been much changed and were rough. I asked if I might give directions to his coachman; he promptly invited me to jump in, and to tell the coachman which way to drive. Intending to begin on the right and follow round to the left, I turned the driver into a side-road which led up a very steep hill, and, seeing a soldier, called to him and sent him up hurriedly to announce to the Colonel whose camp we were approaching that the President was coming. As we slowly ascended the hill, I discovered that Mr. Lincoln was full of feeling, and wanted to encourage our men. I asked if he intended to speak to them, and he said he would like to. I asked him then to please discourage all cheering, noise, or any sort of confusion; that we had had enough of it before Bull Run to ruin any set of men, and that what we needed were cool, thoughtful, hard-fighting soldiers — no more hurraing, no more humbug. He took my remarks in the most perfect good-

nature. Before we had reached the first camp, I heard the drum beating the 'assembly,' saw the men running for their tents, and in a few minutes the regiment was in line, arms presented, and then brought to an 'order' and 'parade rest.' Mr. Lincoln stood up in the carriage, and made one of the neatest, best, and most feeling addresses I ever listened to, referring to our late disaster at Bull Run, the high duties that still devolved on us, and the brighter days yet to come. At one or two points the soldiers began to cheer, but he promptly checked them, saying: 'Don't cheer, boys. I confess I rather like it myself, but Colonel Sherman here says that it is not military; and I guess we had better defer to his opinion.' In winding up, he explained that, as President, he was commander-in-chief; that he was resolved that the soldiers should have everything that the law allowed; and he called on one and all to appeal to him personally in case they were wronged. The effect of this speech was excellent. We passed along in the same manner to all the camps of my brigade; and Mr. Lincoln complimented me highly for the order, cleanliness, and discipline that he observed. Indeed, he and Mr. Seward both assured me that it was the first bright moment that they had experienced since the battle."

"In the crowd at Fort Corcoran," continues General Sherman, "I saw an officer with whom I had had a little difficulty that morning. His face was pale and his lips were compressed. I foresaw a scene, but sat on the front seat of the carriage as quiet as a lamb. This officer forced his way through the crowd to the carriage, and said: 'Mr. President, I have a cause of grievance. This morning I went to speak to Colonel Sherman, and he threatened to shoot me.' Mr. Lincoln, who was still standing, said,

‘Threatened to *shoot you?*’ ‘Yes, sir, he threatened to shoot me.’ Mr. Lincoln looked at him, then at me; and stooping his tall, spare form toward the officer, said to him in a loud stage-whisper, easily heard for some yards around: ‘Well, if I were you, and he threatened to shoot, *I would not trust him, for I believe he would do it.*’ The officer turned about and disappeared, and the men laughed at him. Soon the carriage drove on, and as we descended the hill I explained the facts to the President, who answered, ‘Of course I did n’t know anything about it, but I thought you knew your own business best.’ I thanked him for his confidence, and assured him that what he had done would go far to enable me to maintain good discipline; and it did.”

The days following the Bull Run disaster were full of depression and discouragement, but Lincoln bore up bravely. He began to feel the terrible realities of his position, and saw himself brought face to face with the most awful responsibilities that ever rested upon human shoulders. A disrupted Union, the downfall of the great American Republic, so long predicted by envious critics of our institutions, seemed about to be accomplished. At the best, the Union could be saved only by the shedding of seas of priceless blood and the expenditure of untold treasures. And *he* must act, control, choose, and direct the measures of the Government and the movements of its vast armies. And what if all should fail? What if the resources of the Government should prove inadequate, and its enemies too powerful to be subdued by force? No wonder he was appalled and well-nigh overwhelmed by the dark prospect before him.

Rev. Robert Collyer tells of seeing Lincoln in the summer of 1861, on the steps of the White House, “answering very simply and kindly to the marks of

respect some soldiers had come to pay him, who stood in deep ranks on the grass, that had been top-dressed with compost enough to cover the whole District of Columbia, as the chairman of the committee that had to pass the account told me. And once, curiously, I saw *only his feet*. It was soon after the battle of Bull Run, when some say that *we* ran, and some say that *they* ran. And all was quiet on the Potomac; but the nation was stamping and champing the bit. And passing the White House one day, I saw three pairs of feet on the sill of an open window; and pausing for a moment, a good-natured fellow said, '*That's the Cabinet a sittin', and them big feet's old Abe's.*' So, lecturing in Boston not long after, I said, like a fool as I was, '*That's about all they are good for in Washington, to point their feet out o' window and talk, but go nowhere and do nothing.*' When, indeed, the good President's heart was even then breaking with anxiety and trouble."

"One day," says Mr. A. G. Riddle, "I called at the White House to present a distinguished stranger, who had important matters to bring to Mr. Lincoln's notice. It was evening—cold, rainy, and cheerless. The Executive Mansion was gloomy and silent. At Mr. Lincoln's door we were told by the attendant to enter. We found the room quite dark, and seemingly vacant. I advanced a step or two, to determine if anyone were present, and was arrested by a strange apparition, at first not distinguishable: the long, seemingly lifeless, limbs of a man, as if thrown upon a chair and left to sprawl in unseemly disorder. A step further, and the fallen head disclosed the features of the President. I turned back; a word from my companion reached the drooping figure, and a sepulchral voice bade us advance. We came upon a man, in some respects the most remarkable of any time, in the hour of his pros-

tration and weakness—in the depths of that depression to which his inherited melancholy at times reduced him, now perhaps coming to overwhelm him as he thought of the calamities of his country.”

An old and intimate friend from Springfield, who visited Lincoln at this period, found the door of his office in the White House locked; but going through a private room and a side entrance, he found the President lying on a sofa, evidently greatly disturbed and much excited, manifestly displeased with the outlook. Jumping up from his reclining position, he advanced, saying: “You know better than any man living that from my boyhood up my ambition was to be President. I am President of one part of this divided country at least; but look at me! I wish I had never been born! I’ve a white elephant on my hands, one hard to manage. With a fire in my front and rear, having to contend with the jealousies of the military commanders, and not receiving that cordial co-operation and support from Congress that could reasonably be expected, with an active and formidable enemy in the field threatening the very life-blood of the Government, my position is anything but a bed of roses.”

But in the darkest hours of the nation’s peril, Lincoln never wavered in his purpose. Anxious and careworn, his heart bleeding with grief for the losses of our brave soldiers, and harassed by the grave duties constantly demanding his attention, he had but one purpose,—to go on unfalteringly and unhesitatingly in his course until the supremacy of the Government was restored in every portion of its territory. He wrote in a private letter: “I expect to maintain this contest until successful, or till I die, or am conquered, or my term expires, or Congress or the country forsake me.”

Besides his invincible will and courage, Lincoln had

one important resource in his dark hours, an ever-ready relief for his overcharged emotions. Byron said that he sometimes laughed in order that he might not weep. Lincoln's life-long solace was his love of story-telling. Hon. Hugh McCulloch, afterward Secretary of the Treasury, relates that about a week after the battle of Bull Run he called at the White House, in company with a few friends, and was amazed when, referring to something which had been said by one of the company about the battle that was so disastrous to the Union forces, the President remarked, in his usual quiet manner, "That reminds me of a story," which he told in a manner so humorous as almost to lead his listeners to believe that he was free from care and apprehension. Mr. McCulloch could not then understand how the President could feel like telling a story, when Washington was in danger of being captured and the whole North was dismayed. He learned his mistake afterwards, however, and perceived that his estimate of Lincoln before his election was well grounded, and that he possessed even higher qualities than he had been given credit for; that he was "a man of sound judgment, great singleness and tenacity of purpose, and extraordinary sagacity; that story-telling was to him a safety-valve, and that he indulged in it, not only for the pleasure it afforded him, but for a temporary relief from oppressing cares." It is related that on the morning after the battle at Fredericksburg, Hon. I. N. Arnold, then a member of Congress from Illinois, called on the President, and to his amazement found him engaged in reading "Artemus Ward." Making no reference to that which occupied the universal thought, he asked Mr. Arnold to sit down while he read to him Artemus' description of his visit to the Shakers. Shocked at this proposition, Mr. Arnold said: "Mr. President, is it possible

that with the whole land bowed in sorrow and covered with a pall in the presence of yesterday's fearful reverse, you can indulge in such levity?" Throwing down the book, with the tears streaming down his cheeks and his huge frame quivering with emotion, Lincoln answered: "Mr. Arnold, if I could not get momentary respite from the crushing burden I am constantly carrying, my heart would break!"

Ralph Waldo Emerson said: "His broad good humor, running easily into jocular talk, in which he delighted, and in which he excelled, was a rich gift to this wise man. It enabled him to keep his secret, to meet every kind of man, and every rank in society; to take off the edge of the severest decisions, to mask his own purpose and sound his companion, and to catch, with true instinct, the temper of every company he addressed. And, more than all, it is to a man of severe labor, in anxious and exhausting crises, the natural restorative, good as sleep, and is the protection of the overdriven brain against rancor and insanity."

Even amidst the stern realities of war, Lincoln was keenly appreciative of anything that disclosed the comic or grotesque side of men or happenings, — largely, doubtless, for the relief afforded him. At the beginning of Lee's invasion of Pennsylvania, in June, 1863, when the Union forces under Colonel Milroy were driven out of Harper's Ferry by the Confederates, great consternation and alarm were caused by reports that the Army of the Potomac had been routed and was retreating before Lee, who was pressing forward toward Harrisburg, the capital of Pennsylvania. Mr. Welles records in his Diary (June 17, 1863) that he was at the War Department with the President and Secretary Stanton, when "a messenger came in from General Schenck, declaring that the

stragglers and baggage-trains of Milroy had run away in affright, and squads of them on different parallel roads had alarmed each other, and each fled in terror with all speed to Harrisburg. This alone was asserted to be the basis of the great panic which had alarmed Pennsylvania and the country. The President," continues Mr. Welles, "was in excellent humor. He said this flight would be a capital joke for Orpheus C. Kerr<sup>1</sup> to get hold of. He could give scope to his imagination over the terror of broken squads of panic-stricken teamsters, frightened at each other and alarming all Pennsylvania. General Meigs, who was present, inquired with great simplicity who this person (Orpheus C. Kerr) was. 'Why,' said the President, 'have you not read those papers? They are in two volumes; anyone who has not read them is a heathen.' He said he had enjoyed them greatly — except when they attempted to play their wit on him, which did not strike him as very successful, but rather disgusted him. 'Now, the hits that are given to you, Mr. Welles, or to Chase,' he said, 'I can enjoy; but I daresay they may have disgusted you while I was laughing at them. So *vice versa* as regards myself.'"

Hon. Lawrence Weldon relates that on one occasion he called upon the President to inquire as to the probable outcome of a conflict between the civil and military authorities for the possession of a quantity of cotton in a certain insurrectionary district. As soon as the inquiry had been made, Lincoln's face began lighting up, and he said: "What has become of our old friend Bob Lewis, of DeWitt County? Do you remember a story that Bob used to tell us about his going to Missouri to look up some Mormon lands that belonged

<sup>1</sup> Orpheus C. Kerr (*Office Seeker*) was the pseudonym of Robert H. Newell, a popular humorist of the war period, who dealt particularly with the comic aspects of Washington and army life.



to his father? You know that when Robert became of age he found among the papers of his father a number of warrants and patents for lands in Northeast Missouri, and he concluded the best thing he could do was to go to Missouri and investigate the condition of things. It being before the days of railroads, he started on horseback, with a pair of old-fashioned saddlebags. When he arrived where he supposed his land was situated, he stopped, hitched his horse, and went into a cabin standing close by the roadside. He found the proprietor, a lean, lank, leathery looking man, engaged in the pioneer business of making bullets preparatory to a hunt. On entering, Mr. Lewis observed a rifle suspended in a couple of buck-horns above the fire. He said to the man, 'I am looking up some lands that I think belong to my father,' and inquired of the man in what section he lived. Without having ascertained the section, Mr. Lewis proceeded to exhibit his title papers in evidence, and, having established a good title, as he thought, said to the man, 'Now, that is my title. What is yours?' The pioneer, who had by this time become somewhat interested in the proceedings, pointed his long finger toward the rifle. Said he, 'Young man, do you see that gun?' Mr. Lewis frankly admitted that he did. 'Well,' said he, 'that is my title, and if you don't get out of here pretty d——d quick you will feel the force of it.' Mr. Lewis very hurriedly put his title papers in his saddlebags, mounted his pony and galloped down the road, and, as Bob says, the old pioneer snapped his gun twice at him before he could turn the corner. Lewis said that he had never been back to disturb that man's title since. 'Now,' said Mr. Lincoln, 'the military authorities have the same title against the civil authorities that closed out Bob's Mormon title in Missouri.' " Judge Weldon says that after this anecdote

he understood what would be the policy of the Government in the matter referred to as well as though a proclamation had been issued.

The tedium of meetings of the Cabinet was often relieved, and troublesome matters before it were illuminated, by some apt and pithy story. Secretary Welles tells of such an occasion when "Seward was embarrassed about the Dominican [*sic*] question. To move either way threatened difficulty. On one side was Spain, on the other side the negro. The President remarked that the dilemma reminded him of the interview between two negroes, one of whom was a preacher endeavoring to admonish and enlighten the other. 'There are,' said Josh the preacher, 'two roads for you, Joe. Be careful which you take. One ob dem leads straight to hell, de odder go right to damnation.' Joe opened his eyes under the impressive eloquence and visions of an awful future, and exclaimed, 'Josh, take which road you please; I go troo de wood.' 'I am not disposed to take any new trouble,' said the President, 'just at this time, and shall neither go for Spain nor the negro in this matter, but shall take to the woods.'"

It is related that Charles Sumner, who was a very tall man, and proud of his height, once worried the President about some perplexing matter, when Lincoln sought to change the subject by abruptly challenging his visitor to measure backs. "Sumner," said Mr. Lincoln, "declined to stand up with me, back to back, to see which was the tallest man, and made a fine speech about this being the time for uniting our fronts against the enemy, and not our backs. But I guess he was afraid to measure, though he is a good piece of a man. I have never had much to do with Bishops where I live, but, do you know, Sumner is *my idea of a Bishop*."

A good story of President Lincoln and General

Scott is reported by Major-General Keyes, who at the beginning of the war was on the staff of General Scott, then commander-in-chief of the armies of the United States. "I was sent," says General Keyes, "by my chief to the President with a message that referred to a military subject, and that led to a discussion. Finding that Mr. Lincoln's observations were beginning to tangle my arguments, I said, 'That is the opinion of General Scott, and you know, Mr. President, he is a very able military man.' 'Well,' said the President, 'if he is as *able* a military man as he is *unable* as a politician, I give up.' This was said with an expression of the eye, which he turned on me, that was peculiar to him, and which signified a great deal. The astounding force of Mr. Lincoln's observation was not at all diminished by the fact that I had long suspected that my chief lacked something which is necessary to make a successful politician."

Among the numerous delegations which thronged Washington in the early part of the war was one from New York, which urged very strenuously the sending of a fleet to the southern cities — Charleston, Mobile, and Savannah — with the object of drawing off the rebel army from Washington. Lincoln said the object reminded him of the case of a girl in New Salem, who was greatly troubled with a "singing" in her head. Various remedies were suggested by the neighbors, but nothing seemed to afford any relief. At last a man came along — "a common-sense sort of man," said he, inclining his head towards his callers pleasantly, — "who was asked to prescribe for the difficulty. After due inquiry and examination, he said the cure was very simple. 'What is it?' was the question. 'Make a plaster of *psalm-tunes*, and apply to her feet, and draw the singing *down*,' was the rejoinder." Still better was his reply to another dele-

gation of New York millionaires who waited upon him in 1862, after the appearance of the rebel ram "Merri-mac," and represented to him that they were very uneasy about the unprotected situation of their city, which was exposed to attack and bombardment by rebel rams; and they requested him to detail a gun-boat to defend the city. The gentlemen were fifty in number, very dignified and respectable in appearance, and stated that they represented in their own right \$100,000,000. Lincoln did not wish to offend these gentlemen, and yet he intended to give them a little lesson. He listened with great attention, and seemed to be much impressed by their presence and their statements. Then he replied, very deliberately: "Gentlemen, I am by the Constitution commander-in-chief of the army and navy of the United States; and, as a matter of law, can order anything done that is practicable to be done. But, as a matter of fact, I am not in command of the gun-boats or ships of war; as a matter of fact, I do not know exactly where they are, but presume they are actively engaged. It is impossible for me, in the present condition of things, to furnish you a gun-boat. The credit of the Government is at a very low ebb; greenbacks are not worth more than forty or fifty cents on the dollar; and in this condition of things, if I was worth half as much as you, gentlemen, are represented to be, and as badly scared as you seem to be, *I would build a gun-boat and give it to the Government.*" A gentleman who accompanied the delegation says he never saw one hundred millions sink to such insignificant proportions, as the committee recrossed the threshold of the White House, sadder but wiser men.

"Mr. Lincoln had his joke and his 'little story' over the disruption of the Democracy. He once knew, he said, a sound churchman, of the name of Brown,

who was the member of a very sober and pious committee, having in charge the erection of a bridge over a dangerous and rapid river. Several architects had failed, and at last Brown said he had a friend named Jones who had built several bridges, and could undoubtedly build that one. So Mr. Jones was called in. 'Can you build this bridge?' inquired the committee. 'Yes,' replied Jones, 'or any other. I could build a bridge to h—l, if necessary.' The committee were shocked, and Brown felt called upon to defend his friend. 'I know Jones so well,' said he, 'and he is so honest a man, and so good an architect, that if he states soberly and positively that he can build a bridge to — to — the infernal regions, why, I believe it; but I feel bound to say that I have my doubts about the abutment on the other side.' 'So,' said Mr. Lincoln, 'when politicians told me that the Northern and Southern wings of the Democracy could be harmonized, why, I believed them, of course; but I always had my *doubts about the abutment on the other side.*' "

A delegation once called on Lincoln to ask the appointment of a gentleman as commissioner to the Sandwich Islands. They presented their case as earnestly as possible, and, besides his fitness for the place, they urged that he was in bad health and a residence in that balmy climate would be of great benefit to him. The President closed the interview with the good-humored remark: "Gentlemen, I am sorry to say that there are eight other applicants for that place, and they are *all sicker than your man.*"

## CHAPTER XVII

Lincoln's Wise Statesmanship — The Mason and Slidell Affair — Complications with England — Lincoln's "Little Story" on the Trent Affair — Building of the "Monitor" — Lincoln's Part in the Enterprise — The President's First Annual Message — Discussion of the Labor Question — A President's Reception in War Time — A Great Affliction — Death in the White House — Chapters from the Secret Service — A Morning Call on the President — Goldwin Smith's Impressions of Lincoln — Other Notable Tributes.

**I**N November of 1861 occurred one of the most important and perilous episodes of the war; one whose full significance was not understood, except by a few cool heads, until long afterwards. Two influential Southern politicians, Mason and Slidell, had been sent by the Confederate Government as Commissioners to Great Britain and France, to try to secure the recognition of the Confederacy; and while on board the British steamer "Trent" they were taken prisoners by the U. S. steamer "San Jacinto," and were brought to Washington. Great Britain loudly protested against what she regarded as an unwarrantable seizure of passengers under the British flag, and for a time excitement ran high and war with England seemed almost inevitable. Fortunately for our country, the controversy was amicably settled by the surrender of the prisoners, without any sacrifice of the dignity of the Government of the United States. As stated by "Hosea Biglow," —

We gave the critters back, John,  
Cos Abraham thought 't was right;  
It wa'nt your bullyin' clack, John,  
Provokin' us to fight.

The statesmanship displayed by our Government throughout this difficult affair was of the highest order. Credit for it has been given to Mr. Seward, the Secretary of State, by whom the correspondence and negotiations were conducted. Few men could have managed these details better; yet the course that was so happily determined on was undoubtedly due to the good sense and shrewd wisdom of the President. He not only dictated the policy to be followed by Mr. Seward in his despatches to the American Minister in London, but the more important documents were revised and materially altered by Lincoln's own hand. His management of the Trent affair alone, it has been said, would suffice to establish his reputation as the ablest diplomatist of the war. Coming, as it did, at a time when Lincoln was overwhelmed with the burden of home affairs, it showed the surprising resources of his character. The readiness and ability with which he met this perilous emergency, in a field in which he had had absolutely no experience or preparation, was equaled only by his cool courage and self-reliance in following a course radically opposed to the prevailing public sentiment, to the views of Congress, and to the advice of his own Cabinet. The Secretary of the Navy had hastened to approve officially the act of Captain Wilkes, commander of the "San Jacinto," and Secretary Stanton "cheered and applauded" it. Even Mr. Seward, cautious and conservative diplomat as he was, at first "opposed any concession or surrender of the prisoners." But Lincoln said significantly, "*One war at a time.*" Events have long since afforded the most ample vindication of his course in this important matter. He avoided a foreign war, while at the same time, by committing Great Britain to the doctrine of "peace between neutrals," gained a substantial diplomatic victory over that government.

An excellent account of the circumstances of the Trent affair is given by Benson J. Lossing, the author and historian, who was in Washington when the events occurred. "The act of Captain Wilkes," says Mr. Lossing, "was universally applauded by all loyal Americans, and the land was filled with rejoicings because two of the most mischievous men among the enemies of the Government were in custody. For the moment, men did not stop to consider the law or the expediency involved in the act. Public honors were tendered to Captain Wilkes, and resolutions of thanks were passed by public bodies. The Secretary of the Navy wrote him a congratulatory letter on the 'great public services' he had rendered in 'capturing the rebel emissaries, Mason and Slidell,' and assured him that his conduct had 'the emphatic approval of the department.' The House of Representatives tendered him their thanks for the service he had done. But there was one thoughtful man in the nation, in whom was vested the tremendous executive power of the Republic at that time, and whose vision was constantly endeavoring to explore the mysteries of the near future, who held calmer and wiser thoughts than most men at that critical moment, because his feelings were kept in subjection to his judgment by a sense of heavy responsibility. That man was Abraham Lincoln. The writer was in the office of the Secretary of War when the telegraphic despatch announcing the capture of Mason and Slidell was brought in and read. He can never forget the scene that ensued. Led by Secretary Stanton, who was followed by Governor Andrew of Massachusetts and others who were present, cheer after cheer was heartily given by the company. A little later, the writer was favored with a brief interview with the President, when the clear judgment of that far-seeing and sagacious statesman



uttered through his lips the words which formed the suggestion of, and the keynote to, the judicious action of the Secretary of State afterwards. 'I fear the traitors will prove to be white elephants,' said Mr. Lincoln. 'We must stick to American principles concerning the rights of neutrals,' he continued. 'We fought Great Britain for insisting, by theory and practise, on the right to do just what Captain Wilkes has just done. If Great Britain shall now protest against the act, and demand their release, we must give them up, apologize for the act as a violation of our own doctrines, and thus *forever bind her over to keep the peace in relation to neutrals*, and so acknowledge that she has been wrong for sixty years.' Great Britain did protest and make the demand, and at the same time made preparations for war against the United States. On the same day that Lord John Russell sent the protest and demand to Lord Lyons, the British Minister at Washington, Secretary Seward forwarded a despatch to Minister Adams in London, informing him that this Government disclaimed the act of Captain Wilkes, and giving assurance that it was ready to make a satisfactory arrangement of all difficulties arising out of the unauthorized act. These despatches passed each other in mid-ocean. The Government, in opposition to popular sentiment, decided at once to restore Mason and Slidell to the protection of the British flag. It was soon afterwards done, war between the two nations was averted, and, in the language of President Lincoln, the British Government was 'forever bound to keep the peace in relation to neutrals.' The wise statesmanship exhibited at that critical time was originated by Abraham Lincoln."

Lincoln once confessed that the Trent affair, occurring as it did at a very critical period of the war, had given him great uneasiness. When asked whether it

was not a great trial to surrender the two captured Commissioners, he said: "Yes, that was a pretty bitter pill to swallow, but I contented myself with believing that England's triumph in the matter would be short-lived, and that after ending our war successfully we could if we wished call England to account for the embarrassments she had inflicted upon us. I felt a good deal like the sick man in Illinois who was told he probably had n't many days longer to live, and that he ought to make peace with any enemies he might have. He said the man he hated worst of all was a fellow named Brown, in the next village, and he guessed he had better begin on him. So Brown was sent for, and when he came the sick man began to say, in a voice as meek as Moses', that he wanted to die at peace with all his fellow-creatures, and hoped he and Brown could now shake hands and bury all their enmity. The scene was becoming altogether too pathetic for Brown, who had to get out his handkerchief and wipe the gathering tears from his eyes. It was n't long before he melted and gave his hand to his neighbor, and they had a regular love-feast. After a parting that would have softened the heart of a grindstone, Brown had about reached the room door, when the sick man rose up on his elbow and said, 'But, see here, Brown, if I *should* happen to get well, mind *that old grudge stands!*' So I thought if this nation should happen to get well, we might want that old grudge against England to stand."

Other controversies with England arose during the progress of the war — over the fitting out of Confederate cruisers at English ports to prey upon the commerce of the United States, over captured mails, etc. — in which all of Lincoln's sagacity and patience were needed to avert an open rupture with the British government. That the strain was severe and the

danger great is made clear by an entry in Mr. Welles's Diary, in which he says: "We are in no condition for a foreign war. Torn by dissensions, an exhausting civil war on our hands, we have a gloomy prospect, but a righteous cause that will ultimately succeed. God alone knows through what trials, darkness, and suffering we are to pass." Again, in dealing with the French invasion of Mexico, Lincoln — as Mr. John Bigelow (then minister to France) puts it — "wisely limited himself to a firm repetition of the views and principles held by the United States in relation to foreign invasion," and thereby gained a diplomatic victory. How well "the old grudge against England" stood is shown by the substantial damages obtained from her, some years after the war, on the claims against the Alabama and other privateers, the foundations of which had been wisely laid by President Lincoln.

In the autumn of 1861 was originated the plan of a new naval vessel, which became the "Monitor" — the forerunner of the modern iron-clad, and the formidable little craft that beat back the "Merrimac" ram at Hampton Roads, March 9, 1862, saved the Federal Navy, and revolutionized naval architecture. The interesting story of the project, and of Lincoln's relation to it, is thus told: "The invention belongs to Captain John Ericsson, a man of marvelous ability and most fertile brain; but the creation of the 'Monitor' belongs to two distinguished iron-masters of the State of New York, viz.: the Hon. John F. Winslow and his partner in business, the Hon. John A. Griswold. These two gentlemen were in Washington in the autumn of 1861, for the adjustment of some claims against the Government for iron plating furnished by them for the war-ship 'Galena.' There, through Mr. C. S. Bushnell, the agent of Captain Ericsson, they

learned that the plans and specifications for a naval machine, or a floating iron battery, presented by Captain Ericsson, found no favor with the special board appointed by Congress in 1861 to examine and report upon the subject of iron-clad ships of war. Ericsson and his agent, Mr. Bushnell, were thoroughly disheartened and demoralized at this failure to interest the Government in their plans. The papers were placed in the hands of Messrs. Winslow and Griswold, with the earnest request that they would examine them, and, if they thought well of them, use their influence with the Government for their favorable consideration. Mr. Winslow carefully read the papers and became satisfied that Ericsson's plan was both feasible and desirable. After conference with his friend and partner, Mr. Griswold, it was determined to take the whole matter to President Lincoln. Accordingly, an interview was arranged with Mr. Lincoln, to whom the plans of Captain Ericsson were presented, with all the unction and enthusiasm of an honest and mastering conviction, by Mr. Winslow and Mr. Griswold, who had now become thoroughly interested in the undertaking. The President listened with attention and growing interest. When they were done, Mr. Lincoln said, 'Gentlemen, why do you bring this matter to me? Why not take it to the Department having these things in charge?' 'It has been taken already to the Department, and there met with a repulse, and we come now to you with it, Mr. President, to secure your influence. We are here not simply as business men, but as lovers of our country, and we believe most thoroughly that here is something upon which we can enter that will be of vast benefit to the Republic,' was the answer. Mr. Lincoln was roused by the terrible earnestness of Mr. Winslow and his friend Griswold, and said, in his inimitable manner, 'Well, I don't know much about

ships, though I once contrived a canal-boat — the model of which is down in the Patent Office — the great merit of which was that it could run where there was no water. But I think there is something in this plan of Ericsson's. I'll tell you what I will do. I will meet you to-morrow at ten o'clock, at the office of Commodore Smith, and we will talk it all over.' The next morning the meeting took place according to the appointment. Mr. Lincoln was present. The Secretary of the Navy, with many of the influential men of the Navy Department, also were there. The office where they met was rude in its belongings. Mr. Lincoln sat upon a rough box. Mr. Winslow, without any knowledge of naval affairs other than that which general reading would give, entered upon his task with considerable trepidation, but his whole heart was in it, and his showing was so earnest, practical, and patriotic, that a profound impression was made. 'Well,' said Mr. Lincoln, after Mr. Winslow had finished, 'well, Commodore Smith, what do you think of it?' The Commodore made some general and non-committal reply, whereupon the President, rising from the box, added, 'Well, I think there is something in it. Good morning, gentlemen,' and went out. From this interview grew a Government contract with Messrs. Winslow and Griswold for the construction of the 'Monitor,' the vessel to be placed in the hands of the Government within a hundred days at a cost of \$275,000. The work was pushed with all diligence till the 30th of January, 1862, when the ship was launched at Greenpoint, one hundred and one days from the execution of the contract, thus making the work probably the most expeditious of any recorded in the annals of mechanical engineering."

At the assembling of Congress in December, 1861, Lincoln presented his first Annual Message. Among

its most noteworthy passages was that which touched upon the relations between labor and capital — a subject so prominent in our later day. It was alluded to in its connection with the evident tendency of the Southern Confederacy to discriminate in its legislation in favor of the moneyed class and against the laboring people. On this point the President said:

In my present position, I could scarcely be justified were I to omit raising a warning voice against this approach of returning despotism. It is not needed nor fitting here, that a general argument should be made in favor of popular institutions; but there is one point, with its connections, not so hackneyed as most others, to which I ask a brief attention. It is the effort to place *capital* on an equal footing with, if not above, *labor*, in the structure of government. It is assumed that labor is available only in connection with capital; that nobody labors unless somebody else, owning capital, somehow, by the use of it, induces him to labor. This assumed, it is next considered whether it is best that capital shall *hire* laborers, and thus induce them to work by their own consent, or *buy* them, and drive them to it without their consent. Having proceeded so far, it is naturally concluded that all laborers are either hired laborers or what we call slaves. And further, it is assumed that whoever is once a hired laborer is fixed in that condition for life. Now, there is no such relation between capital and labor as assumed; nor is there any such thing as a free man being fixed for life in the condition of a hired laborer. Both these assumptions are false, and all inferences from them are groundless. Labor is prior to and independent of capital. Capital is only the fruit of labor, and could never have existed if labor had not first existed. Labor is the superior of capital, and deserves much the higher consideration. Capital has its rights, which are as worthy of protection as

any other rights. Nor is it denied that there is, and probably always will be, a relation between labor and capital, producing mutual benefits. The error is in assuming that the whole labor of community exists within that relation. A few men own capital, and those few avoid labor themselves, and, with their capital, hire or buy another few to labor for them. A large majority belong to neither class — neither work for others, nor have others working for them. In most of the Southern States, a majority of the whole people of all colors are neither slaves nor masters; while in the North, a large majority are neither hirers nor hired. Men, with their families — wives, sons, and daughters — work for themselves, on their farms, in their houses, and in their shops, taking the whole product to themselves, and asking no favors of capital on the one hand, nor of hired laborers or slaves on the other. It is not forgotten that a considerable number of persons mingle their own labor with capital — that is, they labor with their own hands, and also buy or hire others to labor for them; but this is only a mixed, not a distinct class. No principle stated is disturbed by the existence of this mixed class. Again, as has already been said, there is not, of necessity, any such thing as the free hired laborer being fixed to that condition for life. Many independent men everywhere in these States, a few years back in their lives, were hired laborers. The prudent, penniless beginner in the world labors for wages awhile, saves a surplus with which to buy tools or land for himself; then labors on his own account another while, and at length hires another new beginner to help him. This is the just and generous and prosperous system, which opens the way to all, gives hope to all, and consequent energy and progress and improvement of condition to all. No men living are more worthy to be trusted than those who toil up from poverty — none less inclined to take, or touch, aught which they have not honestly earned. Let them beware of surrendering a political

power which they already possess, and which, if surrendered, will surely be used to close the door of advancement against such as they, and to fix new disabilities and burdens upon them till all of liberty shall be lost.

The struggle *of* to-day is not altogether *for* to-day — it is for a vast future also. With a reliance on Providence, all the more firm and earnest, let us proceed in the great task which events have devolved upon us.

The reception given at the White House on New Year's day, 1862, was a brilliant and memorable affair. It was attended by distinguished army officers, prominent men from civil life, and the leading ladies of Washington society. "Army uniforms preponderated over black dress coats, and the young Germans of Blenker's division were gorgeously arrayed in tunics embroidered with gold on the collars and cuffs, sword-belts of gold lace, high boots, and jingling spurs." It was such a scene as that before the battle of Waterloo, when the

. . . capital had gathered then  
 Her beauty and her chivalry, and bright  
 The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men;  
 A thousand hearts beat happily; and when  
 Music arose, with its voluptuous swell,  
 Soft eyes looked love to eyes that spake again,  
 And all went merry as a marriage bell.

How many of these brave men were destined never to see another New Year's day; and how many of those soft eyes would soon be dimmed with tears! Something of this feeling must have come over the sad soul of Lincoln. An eye-witness says that he "looked careworn and thoughtful, if not anxious; yet he had a pleasant word for all."



Early in 1862 an event occurred which added to the sorrow that seemed to enshroud the life of Lincoln, and afforded a glimpse into the depths of his tender and sorrowful nature. It was the death of his son Willie, a bright and promising boy, to whom his father was devotedly attached. "This," says Dr. J. G. Holland, "was a new burden; and the visitation which, in his firm faith in Providence, he regarded as providential, was also inexplicable. Why should he, with so many burdens upon him, and with such necessity for solace in his home and his affections, be brought into so tender a trial? It was to him a trial of faith, indeed. A Christian lady of Massachusetts, who was officiating as nurse in one of the hospitals, came in to attend the sick children. She reports that Mr. Lincoln watched with her about the bedside of the sick ones, and that he often walked the room, saying sadly: 'This is the hardest trial of my life. Why is it? Why is it?' In the course of conversations with her, he questioned her concerning her situation. She told him she was a widow, and that her husband and two children were in heaven; and added that she saw the hand of God in it all, and that she had never loved Him so much before as she had since her affliction. 'How is that brought about?' inquired Mr. Lincoln. 'Simply by trusting in God, and feeling that He does all things well,' she replied. 'Did you submit fully under the first loss?' he asked. 'No,' she answered, 'not wholly; but as blow came upon blow, and all were taken, I could and did submit, and was very happy.' He responded, 'I am glad to hear you say that. Your experience will help me to bear my afflictions.' On being assured that many Christians were praying for him on the morning of the funeral, he wiped away the tears that sprang in his eyes, and said, 'I am glad to hear that. I want them to pray for me.

I need their prayers.' As he was going out to the burial, the good lady expressed her sympathy with him. He thanked her gently, and said, 'I will try to go to God with my sorrows.' A few days afterward she asked him if he could trust God. He replied, 'I think I can. I will try. I wish I had that childlike faith you speak of, and I trust He will give it to me.' And then he spoke of his mother, whom so many years before he had committed to the dust among the wilds of Indiana. In this hour of his great trial, the memory of her who had held him upon her bosom and soothed his childish griefs came back to him with tenderest recollections. 'I remember her prayers,' said he, 'and they have always followed me. They have clung to me all my life.'"

An interesting passage in the secret history of the war at this period is narrated by one of the chief actors, Mr. A. M. Ross, a distinguished ornithologist of Canada, whose contribution embodies also so many interesting details of Lincoln's daily life that it seems worth giving rather fully. A few months after the inauguration of President Lincoln, Mr. Ross received a letter from the Hon. Charles Sumner, requesting him to come to Washington at his earliest convenience. "The day after my arrival in Washington," says Mr. Ross, "I was introduced to the President. Mr. Lincoln received me very cordially, and invited me to dine with him. After dinner he led me to a window, distant from the rest of the party, and said: 'Mr. Sumner sent for you at my request; we need a confidential person in Canada to look after our interests, and keep us posted as to the schemes of the Confederates in Canada. You have been strongly recommended to me for the position. Your mission shall be as confidential as you please; no one here but your friend Mr. Sumner and myself shall have any knowl-

edge of your position. Think it over tonight, and if you can accept the mission come up and see me at nine o'clock tomorrow morning.' When I took my leave of him, he said, 'I hope you will decide to serve us.' The position thus offered was one not suited to my tastes, but, as Mr. Lincoln appeared very desirous that I should accept it, I concluded to lay aside my prejudices and accept the responsibilities of the mission. I was also persuaded to this conclusion by the wishes of my friend, Mr. Sumner.

"At nine o'clock next morning, I waited upon the President, and announced my decision. He grasped my hand in a hearty manner, and said: 'Thank you, thank you; I am glad of it. You must help us to circumvent the machinations of the rebel agents in Canada. There is no doubt they will use your country as a communicating link with Europe, and also with their friends in New York. It is quite possible, also, that they may make Canada a base from which to harass and annoy our people along the frontier.'

"After a lengthy conversation relative to private matters connected with my mission, I rose to leave, when he said, 'I will walk down to Willard's with you; the hotel is on my way to the Capitol, where I have an engagement at noon.' Before we reached the hotel a man came up to the President and thrust a letter into his hand, at the same time applying for some office in Wisconsin. I saw that the President was offended at the rudeness, for he passed the letter back without looking at it, saying, 'No, sir! I am not going to open shop here.' This was said in a most emphatic manner, but accompanied by a comical gesture which caused the rejected applicant to smile. As we continued our walk, the President spoke of the annoyances incident to his position, saying: 'These office-seekers are a curse to the country; no sooner

was my election certain, than I became the prey of hundreds of hungry, persistent applicants for office, whose highest ambition is to feed at the Government crib.' When he bade me good-bye, he said, 'Let me hear from you once a week at least.' As he turned to leave me, a young army officer stopped him and made some request, to which the President replied with a good deal of humor, 'No, I can't do that; I must not interfere; they would scratch my eyes out if I did. You must go to the proper department.'

"Some time later," says Mr. Ross, "I again visited Washington. On my arrival there (about midnight) I went direct to the Executive Mansion, and sent my card to the President, who had retired. In a few minutes the porter returned and requested me to accompany him to the President's office, where Mr. Lincoln would shortly join me. The room into which I was ushered was the same in which I had spent several hours with the President on the occasion of my first interview with him. Scattered about the floor and lying open on the table were several military maps and documents, indicating recent use. In a few minutes the President came in and welcomed me in a most friendly manner; I expressed my regret at disturbing him at such an hour. He replied in a good-humored manner, saying, 'No, no! You did right; you may waken me up whenever you please. I have slept with one eye open ever since I came to Washington; I never close both, except when an office-seeker is looking for me.' I then laid before the President the 'rebel mail.' He carefully examined the address of each letter, making occasional remarks. At length he found one addressed to Franklin Pierce, ex-President of the United States, then residing in New Hampshire; and another to ex-Attorney-General Cushing, a resident of Massachusetts. He appeared much surprised, and re-

marked with a sigh, but without the slightest tone of asperity, 'I will have these letters enclosed in official envelopes, and sent to these parties.' When he had finished examining the addresses, he tied up all those addressed to private individuals, saying, 'I won't bother with them; but these look like official letters; I guess I'll go through them now.' He then opened them, and read their contents, slowly and carefully. While he was thus occupied, I had an excellent opportunity of studying this extraordinary man. A marked change had taken place in his countenance since my first interview with him. He looked much older, and bore traces of having passed through months of painful anxiety and trouble. There was a sad and serious look in his eyes that spoke louder than words of the disappointments, trials, and discouragements he had encountered since the war began. The wrinkles about the eyes and forehead were deeper; the lips were firmer, but indicative of kindness and forbearance. The great struggle had brought out the hidden riches of his noble nature, and developed virtues and capacities which surprised his oldest and most intimate friends. He was simple, but astute; he possessed the rare faculty of seeing things just as they are. He was a just, charitable, and honest man.

"When Mr. Lincoln finished reading the letters, I rose to go, saying that I would go to Willard's, and have a rest. 'No, no,' said the President, 'it is now three o'clock; you shall stay with me while you are in town; I'll find you a bed'; and leading the way, he took me into a bedroom, saying, 'Take a good sleep; you shall not be disturbed.' Bidding me 'good night,' he left the room to go back and pore over the rebel letters until daylight, as he afterwards told me. I did not awaken from my sleep until eleven o'clock in the forenoon, soon after which Mr. Lincoln came into

my room, and laughingly said, 'When you are ready, I'll pilot you down to breakfast,' which he did. Seating himself at the table near me, he expressed his fears that trouble was brewing on the New Brunswick border; he said he had gathered further information on that point from the correspondence, which convinced him that such was the case. He was here interrupted by a servant, who handed him a card, upon reading which he arose, saying, 'The Secretary of War has received important tidings; I must leave you for the present; come to my room after breakfast and we'll talk over this New Brunswick affair.'

"On entering his room again, I found him busily engaged in writing, at the same time repeating in a low voice the words of a poem which I remembered reading many years before. When he stopped writing I asked him who was the author of that poem. He replied, 'I do not know. I have written the verses down from memory, at the request of a lady who is much pleased with them.' He passed the sheet, on which he had written the verses, to me, saying, 'Have you ever read them?' I replied that I had, many years previously, and that I should be pleased to have a copy of them in his handwriting, when he had time and an inclination for such work. He said, 'Well, you may keep that copy, if you wish.'"

Hon. William D. Kelly, a Member of Congress from Pennsylvania, relates that during the time of McClellan's Peninsular campaign he called at the White House one morning, and while waiting to see the President, Senator Wilson of Massachusetts entered the chamber, having with him four distinguished-looking Englishmen. The President, says Mr. Kelly, "had evidently had an early appointment, and had not completed his toilet. He was in slippers, and his pantaloons, when he crossed one knee over the other, dis-

closed the fact that he wore heavy blue woollen stockings. It was an agreeable surprise to learn that the chief of the visiting party was Professor Goldwin Smith of Canada, one of the firmest of our British friends. As the President rose to greet them, he was the very impersonation of easy dignity, notwithstanding the negligence of his costume. With a tact that never deserted him, he opened the conversation with an inquiry as to the health of his friend John Bright, whom he said he regarded as a friend of our country and of freedom everywhere. The visitors having been seated, the magnitude of recent battles was referred to by Professor Smith as preliminary to the question whether the enormous losses which were so frequently occurring would not so reduce the industrial resources of the North as to affect seriously the prosperity of individual citizens and consequently the revenue of the country. He justified the question by proceeding to recite the number of killed, wounded, and missing, reported after some of the great battles recently fought. There were two of Mr. Lincoln's official friends who lived in dread of his little stories. Neither of them was gifted with humor, and both could understand his propositions, which were always distinct and clean cut, without such familiar illustrations as those in which he so often indulged; and they were chagrined whenever they were compelled to hear him resort to his stories in the presence of distinguished strangers. They were Senator Wilson of Massachusetts and Mr. Stanton, Secretary of War; and, as Professor Smith closed his arithmetical statement, the time came for the Massachusetts Senator to bite his lips, for the President, crossing his legs in such a manner as to show that his blue stockings were long as well as thick, said that, in settling such matters as that, we must resort to 'darkey arithmetic.' 'To darkey arithmetic!'

exclaimed the dignified representative of the learning and higher thought of Great Britain and her American Dominion. 'I did not know, Mr. President, that you have two systems of arithmetic.' 'Oh, yes,' said the President; 'I will illustrate that point by a little story. Two young contrabands, as we have learned to call them, were seated together, when one said to the other, "Jim, do you know 'rithmetic?" Jim answered, "No; what is 'rithmetic?" "Well," said the other, "it's when you add up things. When you have one and one, and you put dem togedder, dey makes two. And when you subtracts things, when if you have two things and you takes one away, only one remains." "Is dat 'rithmetic?" "Yah." "Well, 'tain't true, den. It's no good!" Here a dispute arose, when Jim said, "Now, you 'spose three pigeons sit on that fence, and somebody shoot one of dem; do t'other two stay dar? I guess not! dey flies away quickern odder feller falls." And, Professor, trifling as the story seems, it illustrates the arithmetic you must use in estimating the actual losses resulting from our great battles. The statements you have referred to give the killed, wounded, and missing at the first roll-call after the battle, which always exhibits a greatly exaggerated total, especially in the column of missing.'"

Mr. Goldwin Smith, the gentleman referred to in the foregoing anecdote, has summarized his impressions of Lincoln in the following paragraph: "Such a person as Abraham Lincoln is quite unknown to our official circles or to those of Continental nations. Indeed, I think his place in history will be unique. He has not been trained to diplomacy or administrative affairs, and is in all respects one of the people. But how wonderfully he is endowed and equipped for the performance of the duties of the chief executive officer of the United States at this time! The precision and minute-



ness of his information on all questions to which we referred was a succession of surprises to me."

Still terser, but hardly less expressive, is Emerson's characterization of Lincoln as one who had been "permitted to do more for America than any other American man."

A striking passage by Mr. Norman Hapgood should have place among these tributes. "Lincoln had no artificial aids. He merely proved the weapon of finest temper in the fire in which he was tested. In the struggle for survival in a national upheaval, he not only proved the living power of integrity and elasticity, but he easily combined with his feats of strength and shrewdness some of the highest flights of taste. As we look back across the changes of his life, — see him passing over the high places and the low, and across the long stretches of the prairie; spending years in the Socratic arguments of the tavern, and anon holding the rudder of state in grim silence; choosing jests which have the freshness of earth, and principles of eternal right; judging potentates and laborers in the clear light of nature, and at ease with both; alone by virtue of a large and melancholy soul, at home with every man by virtue of love and faith, — this figure takes its place high in our minds and hearts, not solely through the natural right of strength and success, but also because his strength is ours, and the success won by him rested on the fundamental purity and health of the popular will of which he was the leader and the servant. Abraham Lincoln was in a deep and lasting sense the first American."

Mr. John Bigelow, already quoted in these pages, summarized Lincoln's character and achievements in a passage of singular eloquence and force. "Lincoln's greatness must be sought for in the constituents of his moral nature. He was so modest by nature that he

was perfectly content to walk behind any man who wished to walk before him. I do not know that history has made a record of the attainment of any corresponding eminence by any other man who so habitually, so constitutionally, did to others as he would have them do to him. Without any pretensions to religious excellence, from the time he first was brought under the observation of the nation he seemed, like Milton, to have walked 'as ever in his great Taskmaster's eye.' St. Paul hardly endured more indignities and buffetings without complaint. He was not a learned man. He was not even one who would deserve to be called in our day an educated man—knew little rather than much of what the world is proud of. He had never been out of the United States, or seen much of the portion of them lying east of the Alleghany Mountains. But the spiritual side of his nature was so highly organized that it rendered superfluous much of the experience which to most men is indispensable—the choicest prerogative of genius. It lifted him unconsciously above the world, above most of the men who surrounded him, and gave him a wisdom in emergencies which is bestowed only on those who love their fellow-man as themselves. . . . In the ordinary sense of the word, Mr. Lincoln was not a statesman. Had he come to power when Van Buren did, or when Cleveland did, he would probably have left Washington at the close of his term as obscure as either of them. The issues presented to the people of the United States at the Presidential election of 1860 were to a larger extent moral questions, humanly speaking, than were those presented at any other Presidential election. They were: first, the right of the majority to rule; second, the right of eight millions, more or less, of our fellow-beings to their freedom; and, third, the institutions and traditions which Washington planted and Jefferson

watered, with the sacrifices necessary for their preservation. These questions subordinated all other political issues, and appealed more directly and forcibly to the moral sentiments of this nation than any issues they had ever before been called to settle either at the ballot-box or by force of arms. A President was needed at Washington to represent these moral forces. Such a President was providentially found in Lincoln . . . a President who walked by faith and not by sight; who did not rely upon his own compass, but followed a cloud by day and a fire by night, which he had learned to trust implicitly."

A very graphic summing-up of Lincoln in person and character is that of Mr. John G. Nicolay, one of his private secretaries, who knew him intimately and understood him well. "President Lincoln was of unusual stature, six feet four inches, and of spare but muscular build," says Mr. Nicolay. "He had been in youth remarkably strong and skilful in the athletic games of the frontier, where, however, his popularity and recognized impartiality oftener made him an umpire than a champion. He had regular and prepossessing features, dark complexion, broad, high forehead, prominent cheek bones, gray, deep-set eyes, and bushy, black hair, turning to gray at the time of his death. Abstemious in his habits, he possessed great physical endurance. He was almost as tender-hearted as a woman. 'I have not willingly planted a thorn in any man's bosom,' he was able to say. His patience was inexhaustible. He had naturally a most cheerful and sunny temper, was highly social and sympathetic, loved pleasant conversation, wit, anecdote, and laughter. Beneath this, however, ran an undercurrent of sadness; he was occasionally subject to hours of deep silence and introspection that approached a condition of trance. In manner he was simple, direct, void of the

least affectation, and entirely free from awkwardness, oddity, or eccentricity. His mental qualities were a quick analytic perception, strong logical powers, a tenacious memory, a liberal estimate and tolerance of the opinions of others, ready intuition of human nature; and perhaps his most valuable faculty was rare ability to divest himself of all feeling or passion in weighing motives of persons or problems of state. His speech and diction were plain, terse, forcible. Relating anecdotes with appreciating humor and fascinating dramatic skill, he used them freely and effectively in conversation and argument. He loved manliness, truth, and justice. He despised all trickery and selfish greed. In arguments at the bar he was so fair to his opponent that he frequently appeared to concede away his client's case. He was ever ready to take blame on himself and bestow praise on others. 'I claim not to have controlled events,' he said, 'but confess plainly that events have controlled me.' The Declaration of Independence was his political chart and inspiration. He acknowledged a universal equality of human rights. 'Certainly the negro is not our equal in color,' he said, 'perhaps not in many other respects; still, in the right to put into his mouth the bread that his own hands have earned, he is the equal of every other man, white or black.' He had unchanging faith in self-government. 'The people,' he said, 'are the rightful masters of both congresses and courts, not to overthrow the Constitution, but to overthrow the men who pervert the Constitution.' Yielding and accommodating in non-essentials, he was inflexibly firm in a principle or position deliberately taken. 'Let us have faith that right makes might,' he said, 'and in that faith let us to the end dare to do our duty as we understand it.' . . ."

## CHAPTER XVIII

Lincoln and his Cabinet — An Odd Assortment of Officials — Misconceptions of Rights and Duties — Frictions and Misunderstandings — The Early Cabinet Meetings — Informal Conversational Affairs — Queer Attitude toward the War — Regarded as a Political Affair — Proximity to Washington a Hindrance to Military Success — Disturbances in the Cabinet — A Senate Committee Demands Seward's Removal from the Cabinet — Lincoln's Mastery of the Situation — Harmony Restored — Stanton becomes War Secretary — Sketch of a Remarkable Man — Next to Lincoln, the Master-mind of the Cabinet — Lincoln the Dominant Power.

**P**RESIDENT LINCOLN'S Cabinet, while containing men of marked ability and fitness for their positions, was in some respects about as ill-assorted and heterogeneous a body of men as were ever called to serve together as ministers and advisers of a great government. Its selection was a surprise to the country. Mr. John Bigelow said it "had the appearance of being selected from a grab-bag." "Not one of the members," continues Mr. Bigelow, "was a personal or much of a political friend of Mr. Lincoln; not one of them had ever had any experience or training in any executive office, except Welles of Connecticut, if he could be claimed as an exception because of having served three years in a bureau of the Navy in Washington. Of military administration, still less of actual war, no member knew anything by experience. The heads of the two most important departments, the Secretaries of State and the Treasury, were both disappointed candidates for the chair occupied by Mr. Lincoln. It was nothing less than Providential that the President was so happily constituted as neither to share nor to

provoke any of the jealousies or envies of either of them, and by his absolute freedom from every selfish impulse gradually compelled them all to look up to him as the one person in whose singleness of eye they could all and always confide. Not immediately, but in the course of two or three years, they got into the habit of turning to him like quarrelling children to their mother to settle all the questions that temporarily divided them."

These Cabinet ministers were a devoted and patriotic body of men, but their misconceptions of their respective rights and duties were at first grotesque. Mr. Seward, a man of far greater administrative experience than Lincoln, assumed that he, rather than the President, was to be the master mind of the new administration. "Premier" he at first called himself. Mr. Stanton, the Secretary of War, thought the Navy should be a sort of adjunct to the War Department — an error of which Secretary Welles of the Navy Department speedily relieved him. These two men were altogether too unlike to get on well together. The cold and somewhat stately Welles was repelled by Stanton's impulsiveness and violence, while Stanton was exasperated by Welles's calmness and lack of excitability. "Lincoln's ministers had no idea that he towered above them," says Mr. John T. Morse, Jr., "and no one of them was at all overawed by him in those days. Presiding over them at the Cabinet, casually meeting them, chatting with them or lounging as was his habit in Stanton's room, Lincoln seemed only officially superior to them. One of them had expected to be President, and another meant to be; a third dared to be insolent and unruly; it seemed to be only by a chance of politics that these men stood to him as junior partners to a senior, or like a board of directors to the president of a corporation."

The unfriendly feeling existing between members of the Cabinet comes out in many entries in Welles's Diary. "Pressing, assuming, violent, impatient, intriguing, harsh, and arbitrary," are examples of the terms in which Stanton is spoken of by Welles. His contempt for the Committee on the Conduct of the War is expressed in no less stinging words. The members of this committee "are most of them narrow and prejudiced partisans, mischievous busybodies, and a discredit to Congress. Mean and contemptible partisanship colors all their acts." It is amusing to note that while Secretary Welles was thus outspoken in his criticisms of others, he himself did not escape calumny. One critic (Thurlow Weed, who, it may be remembered, had objected to Welles's appointment to a Cabinet position when Lincoln suggested it to him in their consultation at Springfield before the inauguration) declared that "It is worse than a fault, it is a crime, to keep that old imbecile at the head of the Navy Department." And another critic expressed the uncomplimentary opinion that "If Lincoln would send old Welles back to Hartford, it would be better for the Navy and for the country."

The accounts of the earliest Cabinet meetings, as given by Secretary Welles, who was nearly always present, are full of interest. "Cabinet meetings, which at that exciting period should have been daily, were infrequent, irregular, and without system," says Mr. Welles. "The Secretary of State notified his associates when the President desired a meeting of the heads of Departments. It seemed unadvisable to the Premier — as he liked to be called and considered — that the members should meet often, and they did not. Consequently there was very little concerted action. At the earlier meetings there was little or no formality; the Cabinet meetings were a sort of privy council or

gathering of equals, much like a Senatorial caucus, where there was no recognized leader and the Secretary of State put himself in advance of the President. No seats were assigned or regularly taken. The Secretary of State was invariably present some little time before the Cabinet assembled, and from his former position as the chief executive of the largest State in the Union as well as from his recent place as a Senator, and from his admitted experience and familiarity with affairs, assumed, and was allowed, as was proper, to take the lead in consultations and also to give tone and direction to the manner and mode of proceedings. The President, if he did not actually wish, readily acquiesced in, this. Mr. Lincoln, having never had experience in administering the Government, State or National, deferred to the suggestions and course of those who had. Mr. Seward was not slow in taking upon himself to prescribe action and to do most of the talking, without much regard to the modest chief, but often to the disgust of his associates, particularly Mr. Bates, who was himself always courteous and respectful, and to the annoyance of Mr. Chase, who had had, like Mr. Seward, experience as a chief magistrate. Discussions were desultory and without order or system; but in the summing-up and conclusions the President, who was a patient listener and learner, concentrated results, and often determined questions adverse to the Secretary of State, regarding him and his opinions, as he did those of his other advisers, for what they were worth and generally no more."

It was perhaps natural, in a country so long free from wars as ours had been, that the Civil War should be regarded as a sort of political affair to be directed from Washington rather than by commanders in the field. For the first year or so the feeling was quite general that military affairs should be directed by



Congress, acting through its Committee on the Conduct of the War, and by the Secretary of War, who complained bitterly that he was not allowed to assume control of military movements and that his plans were thwarted by McClellan (whom he especially hated). The President himself did not escape this condemnation. The feeling at this time is expressed in a sentence in Stanton's complaint, reflected through Chase, that "the President takes counsel of none but army officers in army matters." Chase declared to Welles, according to the latter, that the Treasury as well as other departments "ought to be informed of the particulars of every movement." The generals engaged in planning the campaigns and fighting the battles of the war, and their commander-in-chief the President, could hardly fail to find their task an uphill one when ideas so naïve and fatuous as these prevailed. It is no wonder that General Grant recorded in his Memoirs the opinion that the great difficulty with the Army of the Potomac during the first year of the war was its proximity to Washington; that the conditions made success practically impossible; and that neither he, nor General Sherman, nor any officer known to him, could have succeeded in General McClellan's place, under the conditions that then existed. Gradually, and by slow and often painful experience, a clearer conception of the meaning and methods of war prevailed. In this, as in so many things, Lincoln's insight was first and surest. By patience, tact, shrewdness, firmness, and diplomatic skill, he held the Cabinet together and stimulated its members to their best efforts for the common cause.

But the personal frictions and dissensions in the Cabinet, and the more or less meddlesome attitude of leaders in the Senate and the House, at times sorely tried the strength and patience of the harassed Presi-

dent, compelling him to act the part of peacemaker, and sometimes of judge and arbiter as well. At one time Secretary Stanton threatened to resign; and Chase declared that in that case he should go with him. Stanton and Welles were in frequent antagonism, Welles stating in his Diary that Stanton assumed, or tried to assume, that the Navy should be subject to the direction of the War Department. Seward was "meddlesome" toward other departments; "runs to the President two or three times a day; wants to be Premier," etc., says Welles. "Between Seward and Chase there was perpetual rivalry and mutual but courtly distrust; they entered the Cabinet as rivals, and in cold courtesy so continued." The most serious of these Cabinet embroglios occurred late in December of 1862, while Lincoln was well-nigh overwhelmed by Burnside's dreadful repulse at Fredericksburg. The gist of the affair, as given by Mr. Welles, is that the opposition to Seward in the Senate grew to such a point that a committee was appointed to wait on the President and request Seward's removal from the office of Secretary of State. The President, Mr. Welles tells us, was "shocked and grieved" at this demonstration. He asked all the members of his Cabinet to meet the Senate committee with him. All the members of the Cabinet were present except Seward, who had already sent the President his resignation. The meeting was attended also by Senators Collamer, Fessenden, Harris, Trumbull, Grimes, Howard, Sumner, and Pomeroy. The President, says Mr. Welles, opened the subject for which the meeting was called, taking a conciliatory tone toward the Senators, and requesting from each in turn an expression of opinion as to the wisdom of dropping Seward from the Cabinet. Most of them were strongly of the opinion that Seward ought to go. The President presented his own views, which were, in

effect, that it would be a mistake to let Seward leave the Cabinet at that particular time. "He managed his own case," says Mr. Welles, "speaking freely, and showing great tact, shrewdness, and ability." The meeting continued until nearly midnight, and the matter was left still in the President's hands. The next morning Mr. Welles called early at the White House and found Lincoln practically decided not to accept Seward's resignation, saying that it would never do to take the course prescribed by the Senators; that "the Government would cave in; it could not stand — would not hold water; the bottom would be out," etc. He requested Welles to go at once to Seward and ask him not to press his resignation. Lincoln's intuitional mind seemed at once to connect Secretary Chase with the attack on Seward. Before Welles left the room, the President rang a bell and directed that a message be sent to Chase requesting him to come at once to the White House. When Welles returned from his interview with Seward, who readily promised to withdraw his resignation at the President's request, he found both Chase and Seward waiting for the President. The latter soon came in, and his first words were to ask Welles if he "had seen the man," to which Welles answered that he had, and that he assented to what had been asked of him. The dramatic scene that followed is thus described by Mr. Welles in his Diary: "The President turned to Chase and said, 'I sent for you, for this matter is giving me great trouble.' Chase said he had been painfully affected by the meeting last evening, which was a total surprise to him; and, after some not very explicit remarks as to how he was affected, informed the President he had prepared his resignation of the office of Secretary of the Treasury. 'Where is it?' said the President quickly, his eye lighting up in a moment. 'I brought it with me,' said Chase, taking

the paper from his pocket; 'I wrote it this morning.' 'Let me have it,' said the President, reaching his long arm and fingers toward Chase, who held on, seemingly reluctant to part with the letter, which was sealed, and which he apparently hesitated to surrender. Something further he wished to say; but the President was eager and did not perceive it, and took and hastily opened the letter. 'This,' said he, looking toward me with a triumphant air, 'cuts the Gordian Knot. I can now dispose of this subject without difficulty. I see my way clear.' Chase sat by Stanton, fronting the fire; the President beside the fire, his face toward them, Stanton nearest him. I was on the sofa, near the east window. 'Mr. President,' said Stanton, with solemnity, 'I informed you day before yesterday that I was ready to tender you my resignation. I wish you, sir, to consider my resignation at this time in your possession.' 'You may go to your department,' said the President; 'I don't want yours. This,' holding out Chase's letter, 'is all I want; this relieves me; my way is clear; the trouble is ended. I will detain neither of you longer.' We all rose to leave," concludes Mr. Welles. "Chase and myself came downstairs together. He was moody and taciturn. Someone stopped him on the lower stairs, and I passed on."

A few days later, the President requested both Seward and Chase to withdraw their resignations and resume their duties. This was done, and the trouble was ended for the time. Both Secretaries had got their lessons, and profited by them. By the exercise of tact and patience, with firmness and decision when required, the President had let it be known that he was the head and chief of the Administration.

Next to the President, it was not Secretary Seward, the "Premier" as he wished to be regarded, but the War Secretary, Stanton, who was the master-mind of

the Cabinet. He was the incarnation of energy, the embodiment of patriotic zeal. With all his faults of temper and disposition, he was a man of singular fitness for the responsible position he occupied, and his services to the Government can hardly be overestimated. He had been a Democrat, a member of Buchanan's Cabinet, and was, says Dr. Holland, "the first one in that Cabinet to protest against the downright treason into which it was drifting. He was a man of indomitable energy, devoted loyalty, and thorough honesty. Contractors could not manipulate him, traitors could not deceive him. Impulsive, perhaps, but true; wilful, it is possible, but placable; impatient, but persistent and efficient, — he became at once one of the most marked and important of the members of the Cabinet." Lincoln and Stanton together were emphatically "a strong team."

Stanton was not a member of Lincoln's first Cabinet, but came into it at the beginning of 1862, in place of Simon Cameron, who had just been appointed Minister to Russia. A very interesting account of Cameron's personal relations with Lincoln, the causes that led to his retirement from the Cabinet, and the appointment of Stanton in his place, is given by Cameron himself. He had been the choice of the Pennsylvania delegation for President, at the Chicago Convention in 1860, and it was largely due to him that Lincoln received the nomination. "After the election," said Mr. Cameron, "I made a trip to the West at Mr. Lincoln's request. He had, by letter, tendered me the position of either Secretary of War or Secretary of the Treasury; but when I went to see him he said that he had concluded to make Mr. Seward Secretary of State, and he wanted to give a place to Mr. Chase. 'Salmon P. Chase,' said he, 'is a very ambitious man.' 'Very well,' said I, 'then the War Department is the place for him. We

are going to have an armed conflict over your election, and the place for an ambitious man is in the War Department. There he will have lots of room to make a reputation.' These thoughts of mine, that we were to have war, disturbed Mr. Lincoln very much, and he seemed to think I was entirely too certain about it. Finally, when he came to make up his Cabinet, doubtless remembering what I had said about the War Department, he appointed me Secretary of War."

"There has been," continues Mr. Cameron, "a great deal of misstatement as to Mr. Stanton's appointment as my successor. Stanton had been my attorney from the time I went into the War Department until he took my place as Secretary. I had hardly made a move in which the legality of any question could arise. I had taken his advice. I believed in the vigorous prosecution of the war from the start, while Mr. Seward believed in dallying and compromising, and Mr. Chase was constantly agitated about the expenditure of money; therefore it was that I was careful to have the advice of an able lawyer. When the question of changing me from the War Department to the Russian mission came up, Mr. Lincoln said to me, 'Whom shall I appoint in your place?' My prompt response was, 'Edwin M. Stanton.' 'But,' said he, 'I had thought of giving it to Holt.' 'Mr. Lincoln,' said I, 'if I am to retire in the present situation of affairs, it seems but proper that a friend of mine, or at least a man not unfriendly to me, should be appointed in my place. If you give Mr. Stanton the position, you will not only accomplish this object but will please the State of Pennsylvania and also get an excellent officer.' 'Very well,' said Mr. Lincoln, 'you go and see him, and if he will accept the place he shall have it.' I left the White House and started to find Stanton, passing through the

Treasury Department on my way. As I passed Mr. Chase's office, I stepped in and told him what had occurred between the President and myself. He said, 'Let's send for Stanton; bring him here and talk it over.' 'Very well,' said I, and a messenger was at once sent. Stanton came immediately, and I told him of the conference between the President and myself. He agreed to accept. We walked to the White House, and the matter was settled.

"One of the troubles in the Cabinet which brought about this change was that I had recommended in my annual report, in the fall of 1861, that the negroes should be enlisted as soldiers after they left their masters. This advanced step was regarded by most of the Cabinet with alarm. Mr. Lincoln thought it would frighten the border States out of the Union, and Mr. Seward and Mr. Chase thought it would never do at all."

Just before the retirement of Mr. Cameron, a number of influential Senators waited upon the President and represented to him that inasmuch as the Cabinet had not been chosen with reference to the war and had more or less lost the confidence of the country, and since the President had decided to select a new war minister, they thought the occasion was opportune to change the whole seven Cabinet ministers. They therefore earnestly advised him to make a clean sweep, select seven new men, and so restore the waning confidence of the country. The President listened with patient courtesy, and when the Senators had concluded, he said, with a characteristic gleam of humor in his eye: "Gentlemen, your request for a change of the whole Cabinet because I have made one change, reminds me of a story I once heard in Illinois of a farmer who was much troubled by skunks. They annoyed his household at night, and his wife insisted that he should

take measures to get rid of them. One moonlight night he loaded his old shot-gun and stationed himself in the yard to watch for the intruders, his wife remaining in the house anxiously awaiting the result. After some time she heard the shotgun go off, and in a few minutes the farmer entered the house. 'What luck had you?' said she. 'I hid myself behind the woodpile,' said the old man, 'with the shot-gun pointed toward the hen-roost, and before long there appeared, not one skunk, but *seven*. I took aim, blazed away, and killed one — and he raised such a fearful smell I concluded it was best to let the other six alone.'” The Senators retired, and nothing more was heard from them about Cabinet reconstruction.

Of the character and abilities of Secretary Stanton, and the relations between him and the President, General Grant has admirably said: “I had the fullest support of the President and Secretary of War. No General could want better backing; for the President was a man of great wisdom and moderation, the Secretary a man of enormous character and will. Very often where Lincoln would want to say *Yes*, his Secretary would make him say *No*; and more frequently, when the Secretary was driving on in a violent course, the President would check him. United, Lincoln and Stanton made about as perfect a combination as I believe could, by any possibility, govern a great nation in time of war. . . . The two men were the very opposite of each other in almost every particular, except that each possessed great ability. Mr. Lincoln gained influence over men by making them feel that it was a pleasure to serve them. He preferred yielding his own wish to gratify others, rather than to insist upon having his own way. It distressed him to disappoint others. In matters of public duty, however, he had what he wished, but in the least offensive way. Mr. Stanton never ques-



tioned his own authority to command, unless resisted. He cared nothing for the feeling of others." In a further comparison of the two men, General Grant said: "Lincoln was not timid, and he was willing to trust his generals in making and executing plans. The Secretary [Stanton] was very timid, and it was impossible for him to avoid interfering with the armies covering the capital when it was sought to defend it by an offensive movement against the army guarding the Confederate capital. He could see our weakness, but he could not see that the enemy was in danger. The enemy would not have been in danger if Mr. Stanton had been in the field."

With all his force of character, and his overbearing disposition, Stanton did not undertake to rule the President — though this has sometimes been asserted. He would frequently overawe and browbeat others, but he was never imperious in dealing with Lincoln. Mr. Watson, for some time Assistant Secretary of War, and Mr. Whiting, Solicitor of the War Department, with many others in a position to know, have borne positive testimony to this fact. Hon. George W. Julian, a member of the House Committee on the Conduct of the War, says: "On the 24th of March, 1862, Secretary Stanton sent for the Committee for the purpose of having a confidential conference as to military affairs. Stanton was thoroughly discouraged. He told us the President had gone back to his first love, General McClellan, and that it was needless for him or for us to labor with him." This language clearly shows that Lincoln, not Stanton, was the dominant mind.

Wherever it was possible, Lincoln gave Stanton his own way, and did not oppose him. But there were occasions when, in a phrase used by Lincoln long before, it was "necessary to *put the foot down firmly*." Such

an occasion is described by General J. B. Fry, Provost Marshal of the United States during the war. An enlistment agent had applied to the President to have certain credits of troops made to his county, and the President promised him it should be done. The agent then went to Secretary Stanton, who flatly refused to allow the credits as described. The agent returned to the President, who reiterated the order, but again without effect. Lincoln then went in person to Stanton's office. General Fry was called in by Stanton to state the facts in the case. After he concluded, Stanton remarked that Lincoln must see, in view of such facts, that his order could not be executed. What followed is thus related by General Fry: "Lincoln sat upon a sofa, with his legs crossed, and did not say a word until the Secretary's last remark. Then he said, in a somewhat positive tone, 'Mr. Secretary, I reckon you'll have to execute the order.' Stanton replied, with asperity, 'Mr. President, I cannot do it. The order is an improper one, and I cannot execute it.' Lincoln fixed his eye upon Stanton, and in a firm voice and with an accent that clearly showed his determination, he said, 'Mr. Secretary, *it will have to be done.*' Stanton then realized that he was overmatched. He had made a square issue with the President, and had been defeated. Upon an intimation from him, I withdrew, and did not witness his surrender. A few minutes after I reached my office I received instructions from the Secretary to carry out the President's order."

Vice-President Wheeler relates a characteristic incident illustrating the relations between Lincoln and Stanton. The President had promised Mr. Wheeler an appointment for an old friend as army paymaster, stating that the Secretary of War would instruct the gentleman to report for duty. Hearing nothing fur-

ther from the matter, Mr. Wheeler at length called upon the Secretary and reminded him of the appointment. Mr. Stanton denied all knowledge of the matter, but stated, in his brusque manner, that the name would be sent in, with hundreds of others, to the Senate for its consideration. Mr. Wheeler argued that his friend had been appointed by the Commander-in-chief of the Army, and that it was unjust to ask him to wait for the tardy action of the Senate upon the nomination, and that he was entitled to be mustered in at once. But all in vain; the only reply that could be got from the iron Secretary was, "You have my answer; no argument." Mr. Wheeler went to the chief clerk of the department, and asked for the President's letter directing the appointment. Receiving it, he proceeded to the White House, although it was after executive hours. "I can see Mr. Lincoln now," says Mr. Wheeler, "as he looked when I entered the room. He wore a long calico dressing-gown, reaching to his heels; his feet were encased in a pair of old-fashioned leathern slippers, such as we used to find in the old-time country hotels, and which had evidently seen much service in Springfield. Above these appeared the home-made blue woollen stockings which he wore at all seasons of the year. He was sitting in a splint rocking-chair, with his legs elevated and stretched across his office table. He greeted me warmly. Apologizing for my intrusion at that unofficial hour, I told him I had called simply to ascertain which was the paramount power in the Government, he or the Secretary of War. Letting down his legs and straightening himself up in his chair, he answered, 'Well, it is generally supposed *I am*. What's the matter?' I then briefly recalled the facts attending Sabin's appointment, when, without comment, he said, 'Give me my letter.' Then, taking his pen, he indorsed upon it:

Let the within named J. A. Sabin be mustered AT ONCE. It is due to him and to Mr. W., under the circumstances.

A. LINCOLN."

Armed with this peremptory order, Mr. Wheeler called on Stanton the next morning. The Secretary was furious. He charged Mr. Wheeler with interfering with his prerogatives. Mr. Wheeler remarked that he would call the next morning for the order to muster in. He called accordingly, and, handing him the order, in a rage, Stanton said, "I hope I shall never hear of this matter again."

It is related by Hon. George W. Julian, already quoted, that on a certain occasion a committee of Western men, headed by Mr. Lovejoy, procured from the President an important order looking to the exchange and transfer of Eastern and Western soldiers, with a view to more effective work. "Repairing to the office of the Secretary, Mr. Lovejoy explained the scheme, as he had before done to the President, but was met with a flat refusal. 'But we have the President's order, sir,' said Lovejoy. 'Did Lincoln give you an order of that kind?' said Stanton. 'He did, sir.' 'Then he is a d—d fool,' said the irate Secretary. 'Do you mean to say the President is a d—d fool?' asked Lovejoy, in amazement. 'Yes, sir, if he gave you such an order as that.' The bewildered Illinoisan betook himself at once to the President, and related the result of his conference. 'Did Stanton say I was a d—d fool?' asked Lincoln, at the close of the recital. 'He did, sir, and repeated it.' After a moment's pause, and looking up, the President said, 'If Stanton said I was a d—d fool, then *I must be one*, for he is nearly always right, and generally says what he means. *I will step over and see him.*'" The two men met, and the matter was easily

adjusted. It was this rare combination of good-humor and firmness with an understanding of the other's trials and appreciation of his good qualities, that reduced the friction of official life and enabled Lincoln and Stanton to work together, in the main harmoniously and efficiently, in their great task of prosecuting the war and maintaining the integrity of the Union.

## CHAPTER XIX

Lincoln's Personal Attention to the Military Problems of the War — Efforts to Push forward the War — Disheartening Delays — Lincoln's Worry and Perplexity — Brightening Prospects — Union Victories in North Carolina and Tennessee — Proclamation by the President — Lincoln Wants to See for Himself — Visits Fortress Monroe — Witnesses an Attack on the Rebel Ram "Merrimac" — The Capture of Norfolk — Lincoln's Account of the Affair — Letter to McClellan — Lincoln and the Union Soldiers — His Tender Solitude for the Boys in Blue — Soldiers Always Welcome at the White House — Pardoning Condemned Soldiers — Letter to a Bereaved Mother — The Case of Cyrus Pringle — Lincoln's Love of Soldiers' Humor — Visiting the Soldiers in Trenches and Hospitals — Lincoln at "The Soldiers' Rest."

**E**ARLY in 1862 Lincoln began giving more of his personal attention to military affairs. He was dissatisfied with the slow movements and small achievements of our armies, and sought to infuse new zeal and energy into the Union commanders. He also began a careful study of the great military problems pressing for solution; and he seemed resolved to assume the full responsibilities of his position, not only as the civil head of the Government but as the commander-in-chief of the armies and navies of the United States. In this he was influenced by no desire for personal control of the commanders in the field or interference with their plans; he always preferred to leave them the fullest liberty of action. But he felt that the situation demanded a single head, ready and able to take full responsibility for the most important steps; and, true to himself and his habits of a lifetime, he neither sought responsibility nor flinched from it.

The leading officers of the Union army were mostly young and inexperienced men, and none of them had as yet demonstrated the capacity of a great commander. At best it was a process of experiment, to see what generals and what strategic movements were most likely to succeed. In order to be able to judge correctly of measures and men, Lincoln undertook to familiarize himself with the practical details of military affairs and operations. Here was developed a new and unsuspected phase of his character. The plain country lawyer, unversed in the art of war, was suddenly transformed into the great civil ruler and military chieftain. "He was already," says Mr. A. G. Riddle, "one of the wariest, coolest, and most skilful managers of men. *A born strategist*, he was now rapidly mastering the great outline ideas of the art of war." "The elements of selfishness and ferocity which are not unusual with first-class military chiefs," said General Keyes, a prominent officer of the Union army, "were wholly foreign to Lincoln's nature. Nevertheless, *there was not one of his most trusted warlike counselors in the beginning of the war who equaled him in military sagacity.*" His reliance, in the new duties and perils that confronted him, was upon his simple common-sense, his native power of judgment and discernment. "Military science," says a distinguished officer, "is common-sense applied to the affairs of war." While Lincoln made no claim to technical knowledge in this sphere, and preferred to leave details to his subordinates, he yet developed an insight into military problems and an understanding of practical operations in the field which enabled him not only to approve or disapprove judiciously, but to direct and plan. A striking confirmation of this is given by Mr. J. M. Winchell, who thus relates what happened in a personal interview with the President:

"I was accompanied by one of Mr. Lincoln's personal friends; and when we entered the well-known reception-room, a very tall, lanky man came quickly forward to meet us. His manner seemed to me the perfection of courtesy. I was struck with the simplicity, kindness, and dignity of his deportment, so different from the clownish manners with which it was then customary to invest him. His face was a pleasant surprise, formed as my expectations had been from the poor photographs then in vogue, and the general belief in his ugliness. I remember thinking how much better-looking he was than I had anticipated, and wondering that anyone should consider him ugly. His expression was grave and care-worn, but still enlivened with a cheerfulness that gave me instant hope. After a brief interchange of commonplaces, he entered on a description of the situation, giving the numbers of the contending armies, their movements, and the general strategical purposes which should govern them both. Taking from the wall a large map of the United States, and laying it on the table, he pointed out with his long finger the geographical features of the vicinity, clearly describing the various movements so far as known, reasoning rigidly from step to step, and creating a chain of probabilities too strong for serious dispute. His apparent knowledge of military science, and his familiarity with the special features of the present campaign, were surprising in a man who had been all his life a civilian, engrossed with politics and the practise of the law, and whose attention must necessarily be so much occupied with the perplexing detail of duties incident to his position. It was clear that he made the various campaigns of the war a subject of profound and intelligent study, forming opinions thereon as positive and clear as those he held in regard to civil affairs."



Toward the end of January, 1862, Lincoln sought to overcome the inertia that seemed settling upon the Union forces by issuing the "President's General Order, No. 1," directing that, on the 22d day of February following, "a general movement of the land and naval forces of the United States" be made against the insurgent forces, and giving warning that "the heads of departments, and especially the Secretaries of War and of the Navy, with all their subordinates, and the General-in-Chief, with all other commanders and subordinates of land and naval forces, will severally be held 'to their strict and full responsibilities for prompt execution of this order.'" This order, while it doubtless served to infuse activity into commanders and officials, did not result in any substantial successes to our arms. The President, worn by his ceaseless activities and anxieties, seems to have been momentarily disheartened at the situation. Admiral Dahlgren, who was in command of the Washington navy-yard in 1862, narrates that one day, at this period, "the President drove down to see the hundred-and-fifty-pounder cannon fired. For the first time I heard the President speak of the bare possibility of our being two nations — as if alluding to a previous suggestion. He could not see how the two could exist so near each other. He was evidently much worried at our lack of military success, and remarked that '*no one seemed ready.*'"

It is difficult to portray the worry and perplexity that beset Lincoln's life, and the incessant demands upon his attention, in his efforts to familiarize himself, as he felt compelled to do, with the practical operations of the war. Admiral Dahlgren, who saw him almost daily, relates that one morning the President sent for him, and said, "Well, Captain, here's a letter about some new powder." He read the letter and

showed the sample of powder, — adding that he had burned some of it and it did not seem a good article; there was too much residuum. “Now I’ll show you,” said he. So he got a small sheet of paper and placed some of the powder on it, then went to the fire, and with the tongs picked up a coal, which he blew, with his spectacles still on his nose; then he clapped the coal to the powder, and after the explosion, remarked: “There is too much left there.” There is something almost grotesque, but touching and pathetic as well, in this picture of the President of the United States, with all his enormous cares and responsibilities, engaged in so petty a matter as testing a sample of powder. And yet so great was his anxiety for the success of the armies and navies under his control that he wished to become personally satisfied as to every detail. He did not wish our armies or our war-vessels to lose battles on account of bad powder. “At another time,” Admiral Dahlgren has related, “the President sent for me regarding some new invention. After the agent of the inventor left, the President began on army matters. ‘Now,’ said he, ‘I am to have a sweat of five or six days’” (alluding to an impending battle, for the result of which he was very anxious). Again: “The President sent for me. Some man in trouble about arms; President holding a breech-loader in his hand. He asked me about the iron-clads, and Charleston.” And again: “Went to the Department and found the President there. He looks thin, and is very nervous. Said they were doing nothing at Charleston, only asking for one iron-clad after another. The canal at Vicksburg was of no account, and he wondered how any sensible man could favor it. He feared the favorable state of public expectation would pass away before anything was done. Then he leveled a couple of jokes at the doings

at Vicksburg and Charleston.” No wonder the sympathetic Dahlgren, witnessing the sufferings of the tortured President, should exclaim: “*Poor gentleman! How thin and wasted he is!*”

The gloomy outlook in the Spring of 1862 was relieved by the substantial victories of General Burnside in North Carolina and of General Grant in Tennessee. The President was cheered and elated by these successes. It is related that General Burnside, visiting Washington at this time, called on the President, and that “the meeting was a grand spectacle. The two stalwart men rushed into each other’s arms, and warmly clasped each other for some minutes. When General Burnside was about to leave, the President inquired, ‘Is there anything, my dear General, that I can do for you?’ ‘Yes! yes!’ was the quick reply, ‘and I am glad you asked me that question. My three brigadiers, you know; everything depended on them, and they did their duty grandly!—Oh, Mr. President, we owe so much to them! I should so much like, when I go back, to take them their promotions.’ ‘It shall be done!’ was Lincoln’s hearty response, and on the instant the promotions were ordered, and General Burnside had the pleasure of taking back with him to Foster, Reno, and Parke their commissions as Major-Generals.”

Our brightening prospects impelled the President to issue, on the 10th of April, the following proclamation, breathing his deeply religious spirit:

It has pleased Almighty God to vouchsafe signal victories to the land and naval forces engaged in suppressing an internal rebellion, and at the same time to avert from our country the dangers of foreign intervention and invasion. It is therefore recommended to the people of the United States that at their next weekly assemblages in their accustomed places of pub-

lic worship which shall occur after the notice of this Proclamation shall have been received, they especially acknowledge and render thanks to our Heavenly Father for these inestimable blessings; that they then and there implore spiritual consolation in behalf of all those who have been brought into affliction by the casualties and calamities of sedition and civil war; and that they reverently invoke the Divine guidance for our national counsels, to the end that they may speedily result in the restoration of peace, harmony, and unity throughout our borders, and hasten the establishment of fraternal relations among all the countries of the earth.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

Early in May the President determined on a personal visit to Fortress Monroe, in order to learn what he could from his own observation of affairs in that region. The trip was a welcome respite from the cares and burdens of official life, and he gave himself up, as far as he could, to its enjoyment. The Secretary of War (Stanton) and the Secretary of the Treasury (Chase) accompanied the President. A most interesting account of the expedition is given by General Viele, who was a member of the party and thus had an opportunity to observe Lincoln closely. "When on the afternoon of May 4," says General Viele, "I was requested by the Secretary of War to meet him within an hour at the navy-yard, with the somewhat mysterious caution to speak to no one of my movements, I had no conception whatever of the purpose or intention of the meeting. It was quite dark when I arrived there simultaneously with the Secretary, who led the way to the wharf on the Potomac, to which a steamer was moored that proved to be a revenue cutter, the 'Miami.' We went on board and proceeded at once to the cabin, where to my surprise I found the President and Mr. Chase, who had pre-

ceded us. The vessel immediately got under way and steamed down the Potomac. . . . After supper the table was cleared, and the remainder of the evening was spent in a general review of the situation, which lasted long into the night. The positions of the different armies in the field, the last reports from their several commanders, the probabilities and possibilities as they appeared to each member of the group, together with many other topics, relevant and irrelevant, were discussed, interspersed with the usual number of anecdotes from the never-failing supply with which the President's mind was stored. It was a most interesting study to see these men relieved for the moment from the surroundings of their onerous official duties. The President, of course, was the centre of the group — kind, genial, thoughtful, tender-hearted, magnanimous Abraham Lincoln! It was difficult to know him without knowing him intimately, for he was as guileless and single-hearted as a child; and no man ever knew him intimately who did not recognize and admire his great abilities, both natural and acquired, his large-heartedness and sincerity of purpose. . . . He would sit for hours during the trip, repeating passages of Shakespeare's plays, page after page of Browning, and whole cantos of Byron. His inexhaustible stock of anecdotes gave to superficial minds the impression that he was not a thoughtful and reflecting man; whereas the fact was directly the reverse. These anecdotes formed no more a part of Mr. Lincoln's mind than a smile forms a part of the face. They came unbidden, and, like a forced smile, were often employed to conceal a depth of anxiety in his own heart, and to dissipate the care that weighed upon the minds of his associates. Both Mr. Chase and Mr. Stanton were under great depression of spirits when we started, and Mr. Chase remarked with

a good deal of seriousness that he had forgotten to write a very important letter before leaving. It was too late to remedy the omission, and Mr. Lincoln at once drove the thought of it from his mind by telling him that a man was sometimes lucky in forgetting to write a letter, for he seldom knew what it contained until it appeared again some day to confront him with an indiscreet word or expression; and then he told a humorous story of a sad catastrophe that happened in a family, which was ascribed to something that came in a letter — a catastrophe so far beyond the region of possibility that it set us all laughing, and Mr. Chase lost his anxious look. That reminded Mr. Stanton of the dilemma he had been placed in, just before leaving, by the receipt of a telegram from General Mitchell, who was in Northern Alabama. The telegram was indistinct, and could not be clearly understood; there was no time for further explanation, and yet an immediate answer was required; so the Secretary took the chances and answered back, 'All right; go ahead.' 'Now, Mr. President,' said he, 'if I have made a mistake, I must countermand my instructions.' 'I suppose you meant,' said Mr. Lincoln, 'that it was all right if it was good for him, and all wrong if it was not. That reminds me,' said he, 'of a story about a horse that was sold at the cross-roads near where I once lived. The horse was supposed to be fast, and quite a number of people were present at the time appointed for the sale. A small boy was employed to ride the horse backward and forward to exhibit his points. One of the would-be buyers followed the boy down the road and asked him confidentially if the horse had a splint. 'Well, mister,' said the boy, 'if it's good for him he's got it, but if it is n't good for him he has n't.' 'And that's the position,' said the President, 'you seem to have left

General Mitchell in. Well, Stanton, I guess he'll come out right; but at any rate you can't help him now.' . . . Mr. Lincoln always had a pleasant word to say the last thing at night and the first thing in the morning. He was always the first one to awake, although not the first to rise. The day-time was spent principally upon the quarter-deck, and the President entertained us with numerous anecdotes and incidents of his life, of the most interesting character. Few were aware of the physical strength possessed by Mr. Lincoln. In muscular power he was one in a thousand. One morning, while we were sitting on deck, he saw an axe in a socket on the bulwarks, and taking it up, he held it at arm's length at the extremity of the helve with his thumb and forefinger, continuing to hold it there for a number of minutes. The most powerful sailors on board tried in vain to imitate him. Mr. Lincoln said he could do this when he was eighteen years of age, and had never seen a day since that time when he could not.<sup>1</sup>

"It was late in the evening," continues General Viele, "when we arrived at Fortress Monroe. . . . Answering the hail of the guard-boats, we made a landing, and the Secretary of War immediately dispatched a messenger for General Wool, the commander

<sup>1</sup> Lincoln never lost his interest in exhibitions of physical strength, and involuntarily he always compared its possessor with himself. On one occasion—it was in 1859—he was asked to make an address at the State Fair of Wisconsin, which was held at Milwaukee. Among the attractions was a "strong man" who went through the usual performance of tossing iron balls and letting them roll back down his arms, lifting heavy weights, etc. Apparently Lincoln had never seen such a combination of strength and agility before. He was greatly interested. Every now and then he gave vent to the ejaculation, "By George! By George!" After the speech was over, Governor Hoyt introduced him to the athlete; and as Lincoln stood looking down at him from his great height, evidently pondering that one so small could be so strong, he suddenly gave utterance to one of his quaint speeches. "Why," he said, "I could lick salt off the top of your hat!"

of the fort; on whose arrival it was decided to consult at once with Admiral Goldsborough, the commander of the fleet, whose flag-ship, the 'Minnesota,' a superb model of naval architecture, lay a short distance off the shore. The result of this conference was a plan to get up an engagement the next day between the 'Merrimac' and the 'Monitor,' so that during the fight the 'Vanderbilt,' which had been immensely strengthened for the purpose, might put on all steam and run her down. Accordingly, the next morning, the President and party went over to the Rip Raps to see the naval combat. The 'Merrimac' moved out of the mouth of the Elizabeth river, quietly and steadily, just as she had come out only a few weeks before when she had sunk the 'Congress' and the 'Cumberland.' She wore an air of defiance and determination even at that distance. The 'Monitor' moved up and waited for her. All the other vessels got out of the way to give the 'Vanderbilt' and the 'Minnesota' room to bear down upon the rebel terror as soon as she should clear the coast line. It was a calm Sabbath morning, and the air was still and tranquil. Suddenly the stillness was broken by the cannon from the vessels and the great guns from the Rip Raps, that filled the air with sulphurous smoke and a terrific noise that reverberated from the fortress and the opposite shore like thunder. The firing was maintained for several hours, but all to no purpose; the 'Merrimac' moved sullenly back to her position. It was determined that night that on the following day vigorous offensive operations should be undertaken. The whole available naval force was to bombard Sewall's Point, and under cover of the bombardment the available troops from Fortress Monroe were to be landed at that point and move on Norfolk. Accordingly, the next morning a tremendous cannon-



ading of Sewall's Point took place. The wooden sheds at that place were set on fire and the battery was silenced. The 'Merrimac,' coated with mail and lying low in the water, looked on but took no part. Night came on, and the cannonading ceased. It was so evident that the 'Merrimac' intended to act only on the defensive, and that as long as she remained where she was no troops could be landed in that vicinity, that they were ordered to disembark. That night the President, with the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Treasury, went over on the 'Miami' to the Virginia shore, and by the light of the moon landed on the beach and walked up and down a considerable distance to assure himself that there could be no mistake in the matter. How little the Confederacy dreamed what a visitor it had that night to the 'sacred soil.'"

The following morning an advance was made upon Norfolk by the route proposed by General Viele. The attempt was successful, and before night our forces were in control of the captured city. Some time after midnight, as General Viele records, "with a shock that shook the city, and with an ominous sound that could not be mistaken, the magazine of the 'Merrimac' was exploded, the vessel having been cut off from supplies and deserted by the crew; and thus this most formidable engine of destruction, that had so long been a terror, not only to Hampton Roads, but to the Atlantic coast, went to her doom, a tragic and glorious *finale* to the trip of the 'Miami.'"

Secretary Chase had accompanied the expedition against Norfolk, returning to Fortress Monroe with General Wool immediately after the surrender of the city. The scene which ensued on the announcement of the good tidings they brought back to the anxious parties awaiting news of them was thus described by the President himself: "Chase and Stanton had ac-

accompanied me to Fortress Monroe. While we were there, an expedition was fitted out for an attack on Norfolk. Chase and General Wool disappeared about the time we began to look for tidings of the result, and after vainly waiting their return till late in the evening, Stanton and I concluded to retire. My room was on the second floor of the Commandant's house, and Stanton's was below. The night was very warm, — the moon shining brightly, — and, too restless to sleep, I sat for some time by the table, reading. Suddenly hearing footsteps, I looked out of the window, and saw two persons approaching, whom I knew by their relative size to be the missing men. They came into the passage, and I heard them rap at Stanton's door and tell him to get up and come upstairs. A moment afterward they entered my room. 'No time for ceremony, Mr. President,' said General Wool; 'Norfolk is ours!' Stanton here burst in, just out of bed, clad in a long night-gown which nearly swept the floor, his ear catching, as he crossed the threshold, Wool's last words. Perfectly overjoyed, he rushed at the General, whom he hugged most affectionately, fairly lifting him from the floor in his delight. The scene altogether must have been a comical one, though at the time we were all too greatly excited to take much note of mere appearances."

Lincoln's general grasp of military strategy, and his keen understanding of the specific problems confronting the Army of the Potomac in the critical autumn of 1862, are well indicated in the following communication to General McClellan:

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON,  
October 13, 1862.

MY DEAR SIR: — You remember my speaking to you of what I called your over-cautiousness. Are you not over-cautious when you assume that you cannot do

what the enemy is constantly doing? Should you not claim to be at least his equal in prowess, and act upon the claim?

As I understand, you telegraphed General Halleck that you cannot subsist your army at Winchester unless the railroad from Harper's Ferry to that point be put in working order. But the enemy does now subsist his army at Winchester, at a distance nearly twice as great from railroad transportation as you would have to do, without the railroad last named. He now waggons from Culpepper Court-House, which is just about twice as far as you would have to do from Harper's Ferry. He is certainly not more than half as well provided with waggons as you are. I certainly should be pleased for you to have the advantage of the railroad from Harper's Ferry to Winchester; but it wastes all the remainder of autumn to give it to you, and, in fact, ignores the question of *time*, which cannot and must not be ignored.

Again, one of the standard maxims of war, as you know, is, "to operate upon the enemy's communications as much as possible, without exposing your own." You seem to act as if this applies *against* you, but cannot apply in your *favor*. Change positions with the enemy, and think you not he would break your communication with Richmond within the next twenty-four hours? You dread his going into Pennsylvania. But if he does so in full force, he gives up his communications to you absolutely, and you have nothing to do but to follow and ruin him; if he does so with less than full force, fall upon and beat what is left behind all the easier. Exclusive of the water line, you are now nearer Richmond than the enemy is, by the route that you *can* and he *must* take. Why can you not reach there before him, unless you admit that he is more than your equal on the march? His route is the *arc* of a circle, while yours is the *chord*. The roads are as good on yours as on his.

You know I desired, but did not order, you to cross

the Potomac below instead of above the Shenandoah and Blue Ridge. My idea was, that this would at once menace the enemy's communications, which I would seize if he would permit. If he should move northward, I would follow him closely, holding his communications. If he should prevent our seizing his communications, and move toward Richmond, I would press closely to him, fight him if a favorable opportunity should present, and at least try to beat him to Richmond on the inside track. I say "try," for if we never try, we shall never succeed. If he make a stand at Winchester, moving neither north nor south, I would fight him there, on the idea that if we cannot beat him when he bears the wastage of coming to us, we never can when we bear the wastage of going to him. This proposition is a simple truth, and is too important to be lost sight of for a moment. In coming to us, he tenders us an advantage which we should not waive. We should not so operate as to merely drive him away. As we must beat him somewhere, or fail finally, we can do it, if at all, easier near to us than far away. If we cannot beat the enemy where he now is, we never can, he again being within the intrenchments of Richmond. Recurring to the idea of going to Richmond on the inside track, the facility of supplying from the side away from the enemy is remarkable, as it were, by the different spokes of a wheel, extending from the hub toward the rim, and this whether you move directly by the chord, or on the inside arc, hugging the Blue Ridge more closely. The chord-line, as you see, carries you by Aldie, Haymarket, and Fredericksburg, and you see how turnpikes, railroads, and finally the Potomac by Aquia Creek, meet you at all points from Washington. The same, only the lines lengthened a little, if you press closer to the Blue Ridge part of the way. The gaps through the Blue Ridge I understand to be about the following distances from Harper's Ferry, to wit: Vestal's, five miles; Gregory's, thirteen; Snicker's, eighteen; Ashby's, twenty-eight;

Manassas, thirty-eight; Chester, forty-five; and Thornton's, fifty-three. I should think it preferable to take the route nearest the enemy, disabling him to make an important move without your knowledge, and compelling him to keep his forces together for dread of you. The gaps would enable you to attack if you should wish. For a great part of the way you would be practically between the enemy and both Washington and Richmond, enabling us to spare you the greatest number of troops from here. When, at length, running to Richmond ahead of him enables him to move this way, if he does so, turn and attack him in the rear. But I think he should be engaged long before such point is reached. It is all easy if our troops march as well as the enemy, and it is unmanly to say they cannot do it. This letter is in no sense an order.

Yours truly, A. LINCOLN.

MAJOR-GENERAL McCLELLAN.

Throughout the entire war President Lincoln was always keenly solicitous for the welfare of the Union soldiers. He knew that upon them everything depended; and he felt bound to them not only by official relations, but by the tenderer ties of human interest and love. In all his proclamations and public utterances he gave the fullest credit to the brave men in the field, and claimed for them the country's thanks and gratitude. His sympathy for the soldiers was as tender as that of a woman, and his tears were ever ready to start at the mention of their hardships, their bravery, their sufferings and losses. Nothing that he could do was left undone to minister to their comfort in field or camp or hospital. His most exacting cares were never permitted to divert his thoughts from them, and his anxious and tender sympathy included all whom they held dear. Said Mr. Riddle, in a speech in Congress in 1863: "Let not the distant mother, who has given

up a loved one to fearful death, think that the President does not sympathize with her sorrow, and would not have been glad — oh, how glad — to so shape events as to spare the sacrifices. And let not fathers and mothers and wives anywhere think that as he sees the long blue regiments of brave ones marching away, stepping to the drum-beat, he does not contemplate them and feel his responsibility as he thinks how many of them shall go to nameless graves, unmarked save by the down-looking eyes of God's pitying angels." The feeling of the soldiers toward Lincoln was one of filial respect and love. He was not only the President, the commander-in-chief of all the armies and navies of the United States, but their good "Father Abraham," who loved every man, even the humblest, that wore the Union blue.

Of Lincoln's personal relations with the soldiers, enough interesting anecdotes could be collected to fill a volume. He saw much of them in Washington, as they marched through that city on their way to the front, or returned on furlough or discharge, or filled the overcrowded hospitals of the capital. Often they called upon him, singly or with companions; and he always had for them a word, however brief, of sympathy and cheer. He was always glad to see them at the White House. They were the one class of visitors who seldom came to ask for favors, and never to pester him with advice. It was a real treat for the harried President to escape from the politicians and have a quiet talk with a private soldier. Among the innumerable petitioners for executive clemency or favor, none were so graciously received as those who appeared in behalf of soldiers. It was half a victory to say that the person for whom the favor was desired was a member of the Union army.

As he wrote the pardon of a young soldier, sen-

tenced to be shot for sleeping while on sentinel duty, the President remarked to a friend standing by: "I could not think of going into eternity with the blood of that poor young man on my hands. It is not to be wondered at that a boy raised on a farm, probably in the habit of going to bed at dark, should, when required to watch, fall asleep; and I cannot consent that he be shot for such an act." The youth thus reprieved was afterwards found among the slain on the field of Fredericksburg, with a photograph of Lincoln, on which he had written, "God bless President Lincoln," worn next his heart.

Rev. Newman Hall, of London, has repeated in a sermon an anecdote told him by a Union general. "The first week of my command," said the officer, "there were twenty-four deserters sentenced by court martial to be shot, and the warrants for their execution were sent to the President to be signed. He refused. I went to Washington and had an interview. I said: 'Mr. President, unless these men are made an example of, the army itself is in danger. Mercy to the few is cruelty to the many.' He replied: 'Mr. General, there are already too many weeping widows in the United States. For God's sake, don't ask me to add to the number, for *I won't do it.*'"

It came to the knowledge of Lincoln that a widow living in Boston — a Mrs. Bixby — had lost five sons in the service of their country. Without delay he addressed to the bereaved mother the following touching note:

I have been shown on the file of the War Department a statement of the Adjutant-General of Massachusetts, that you are the mother of five sons who have died gloriously on the field of battle. I feel how weak and fruitless must be any word of mine which should attempt to beguile you from the grief of a loss so over-

whelming; but I cannot refrain from tendering to you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the Republic they died to save. I pray that our Heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavements, and leave only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom.

Yours, very sincerely and respectfully,

A. LINCOLN.

A case of unusual interest is that of Cyrus Pringle, a Vermont Quaker who was drafted into the military service in 1863, and refused to serve on the ground that his religion and his conscience would not permit him to bear arms. His story, as recorded in his diary, was given to the world after his death ("Atlantic Monthly," February, 1913). In spite of his protests, Pringle was taken South and forced to wear a uniform and carry a gun, though he refused to use it or even to clean it. His obstinacy, as it was supposed to be, caused him much suffering, sometimes even physical punishment, all of which he bore patiently, believing that if he was steadfast in his faith relief would somehow come. It did come, but not until — after five months of hardship and distress of mind and body — his case, with that of other Quakers, finally reached the President. "I want you to go and tell Stanton," said Lincoln to the gentleman who had presented the case to him, "that it is my wish that all those young men be sent home at once." The gentleman went to Stanton with the message, but Stanton was unwilling to obey it. While they were arguing the matter, the President entered the room. "*It is my urgent wish,*" said he. Stanton yielded, and the unfortunate Quakers were given permission to return to their homes — none too soon to save the life of Pringle, who records in his diary: "Upon my arrival in New York I was seized



with delirium, from which I only recovered after many weeks, through the mercy and favor of Him who in all this trial had been our guide and strength and comfort."

Anything that savored of the wit and humor of the soldiers was especially relished by Lincoln. Any incident that showed that "the boys" were mirthful and jolly amidst their privations seemed to commend itself to him. There was a story of a soldier in the Army of the Potomac, carried to the rear of battle with both legs shot off, who, seeing a pie-woman hovering about, asked, "Say, old lady, are them pies *sewed* or *pegged*?" And there was another one of a soldier at the battle of Chancellorsville, whose regiment, waiting to be called into the fight, was taking coffee. The hero of the story put to his lips a crockery mug which he had carried, with infinite care, through several campaigns. A stray bullet, just missing the coffee-drinker's head, dashed the mug into fragments and left only its handle on his finger. Turning his head in that direction, the soldier angrily growled, "Johnny, you can't do that again!" Lincoln, relating these two stories together, said, "It seems as if neither death nor danger could quench the grim humor of the American soldier."

A juvenile "brigadier" from New York, with a small detachment of cavalry, having imprudently gone within the rebel lines near Fairfax Court House, was captured by "guerillas." Upon the fact being reported to Lincoln, he said that he was very sorry to lose the horses. "What do you mean?" inquired his informant. "Why," rejoined the President, "I can make a 'brigadier' any day; but those horses cost the government a hundred and twenty-five dollars a head!"

Lincoln was especially fond of a joke at the expense of some high military or civil dignitary. He was intensely amused by a story told by Secretary Stanton,

of a trip made by him and General Foster up the Broad river in North Carolina, in a tug-boat, when, reaching our outposts on the river bank, a Federal picket yelled out, "Who have you got on board that tug?" The severe and dignified answer was, "The Secretary of War and Major-General Foster." Instantly the picket roared back: "*We've got Major-Generals enough up here — why don't you bring us up some hardtack?*"

On one occasion, when the enemy were threatening the defenses of Washington, the President made a personal visit to the men in the trenches, for the purpose, as he stated, of "encouraging the boys." He walked about among them, telling them to hold their ground and he would soon give them reinforcements. His presence had a most inspiring effect, and the trenches were held by a few hundred soldiers of the Invalid Corps until the promised help came and the enemy withdrew.

On a visit to City Point, Lincoln called upon the head surgeon at that place and said he wished to visit all the hospitals under his charge. The surgeon asked if he knew what he was undertaking; there were five or six thousand soldiers at that place, and it would be quite a tax upon his strength to visit all the wards. Lincoln answered, with a smile, that he guessed he was equal to the task; at any rate he would try, and go as far as he could; he should never, probably, see the boys again, and he wanted them to know that he appreciated what they had done for their country. Finding it useless to try to dissuade him, the surgeon began his rounds with the President, who walked from bed to bed, extending his hand and saying a few words of sympathy to some, making kind inquiries of others, and welcomed by all with the heartiest cordiality. After some hours the tour of the various hospitals was made, and Lincoln returned with the surgeon to his office.

They had scarcely entered, however, when a messenger came saying that one ward had been overlooked, and "the boys" wanted to see the President. The surgeon, who was thoroughly tired, and knew Lincoln must be, tried to dissuade him from going; but the good man said he must go back; "the boys" would be so disappointed. So he went with the messenger, accompanied by the surgeon, shook hands with the gratified soldiers, and then returned to the office. The surgeon expressed the fear that the President's arm would be lamed with so much hand-shaking, saying that it certainly must ache. Lincoln smiled, and saying something about his "strong muscles," stepped out at the open door, took up a very large heavy axe which lay there by a log of wood, and chopped vigorously for a few moments, sending the chips flying in all directions; and then, pausing, he extended his right arm to its full length, holding the axe out horizontally, without its even quivering as he held it. Strong men who looked on — men accustomed to manual labor — could not hold the axe in that position for a moment.

In summer Lincoln's favorite home was at "The Soldiers' Rest," a place a few miles out of Washington, on the Maryland side, where old and disabled soldiers of the regular army found a refuge. It was a lovely spot, situated on a beautifully wooded hill, reached by a winding road, shaded by thick-set branches. On his way there he often passed long lines of ambulances, laden with the suffering victims of a recent battle. A friend who met him on such an occasion, says: "When I met the President, his attitude and expression spoke the deepest sadness. He paused, and, pointing his hand towards the wounded men, he said: 'Look yonder at those poor fellows. I cannot bear it! This suffering, this loss of life, is dreadful!' Recalling a letter he had written years before to a

suffering friend whose grief he had sought to console, I reminded him of the incident, and asked him: 'Do you remember writing to your sorrowing friend these words: "And this too shall pass away. Never fear. Victory will come."' 'Yes,' replied he, '*victory will come, but it comes slowly.*'"

## CHAPTER XX

Lincoln and McClellan — The Peninsular Campaign of 1862 — Impatience with McClellan's Delay — Lincoln Defends McClellan from Unjust Criticism — Some Harrowing Experiences — McClellan Recalled from the Peninsula — His Troops Given to General Pope — Pope's Defeat at Manassas — A Critical Situation — McClellan again in Command — Lincoln Takes the Responsibility — McClellan's Account of his Reinstatement — The Battle of Antietam — The President Vindicated — Again Dissatisfied with McClellan — Visits the Army in the Field — The President in the Saddle — Correspondence between Lincoln and McClellan — McClellan's Final Removal — Lincoln's Summing-up of McClellan — McClellan's "Body-guard."

PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S relations with no other person have been so much discussed as those with General McClellan. Volumes have been written on this subject; many heated and intemperate words have been uttered and wrong conclusions reached. Whatever defects may have marked McClellan's qualities as a soldier, he must remain historically one of the most conspicuous figures of the war. He organized the largest and most important of the Union armies, and was its first commander in the field. He was one of the two out of the five commanders of the Army of the Potomac, before Grant, who led that army to victory; the other three having led it only to disastrous defeat. Great things were expected of him; and when he failed to realize the extravagant expectations of those who thought the war should be ended within a year, he received equally extravagant condemnation. It is noticeable that this condemnation came chiefly from civilians — from politicians, from Congress, from the press: not the best judges of military affairs. His own army

— the men who were with him on the battlefield and risked their lives and their cause under his leadership — never lost faith in him. Of all the commanders of the Army of the Potomac, he was the one most believed in by his troops. Even after his removal, at a grand review of the army by the President, after the battle of Fredericksburg, it was not for the new commander, Burnside, but the old commander, McClellan, that the troops gave their heartiest cheers. It is worth remembering also that the war was not ended until two and a half years after McClellan's retirement, and until trial after trial had been made and failure after failure had been met in the effort to find a successful leader for our armies. The initial task of organization, of creating a great army in the field, fell upon him — a task so well performed that General Meade, his first efficient successor, said, "Had there been no McClellan there could have been no Grant, for the army [organization] made no essential improvements under any of his successors." And Grant, the last and finally victorious of these successors — who was at one time criticized as being "as great a discouragement as McClellan" — recorded in his Memoirs the conviction (already quoted in these pages) that the conditions under which McClellan worked were fatal to success, and that he himself could not have succeeded in his place under those conditions.

It is not in the province of the present narrative to enter into a consideration of the merits or demerits of McClellan as a soldier, but to treat of his personal relations with President Lincoln. Between the two men, notwithstanding many sharp differences of opinion and of policy, there seems to have been a feeling of warm personal friendship and sincere respect. Now that both have passed beyond the reach of earthly praise or blame, we may well honor their memory and credit

each with having done the best he could to serve his country.

McClellan was appointed to the command of the Union armies upon the retirement of the veteran General Scott, in November of 1861. He had been but a captain in the regular army, but his high reputation and brilliant soldierly qualities had led to his being sent abroad to study the organization and movements of European armies; and this brought him into prominence as a military man. It was soon after McClellan took command that President Lincoln began giving close personal attention to the direction of military affairs. He formed a plan of operations against the Confederate army defending Richmond, which differed entirely from the plan proposed by McClellan. The President's plan was, in effect, to repeat the Bull Run expedition by moving against the enemy in Virginia at or near Manassas. McClellan preferred a transference of the army to the region of the lower Chesapeake, thence moving up the Peninsula by the shortest land route to Richmond. (This was a movement, it may be remarked, which was finally carried out before Richmond fell in 1865.) The President discussed the relative merits of the two plans in the following frank and explicit letter to McClellan:

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, D. C.,  
February 3, 1862.

MAJOR-GENERAL McCLELLAN.

MY DEAR SIR: You and I have distinct and different plans for a movement of the Army of the Potomac; yours to be done by the Chesapeake, up the Rappahannock to Urbana, and across to the terminus of the railroad on the York river; mine to move directly to a point on the railroad southwest of Manassas. If you will give me satisfactory answers to the following questions, I shall gladly yield my plan to yours:

1st. Does your plan involve a greatly larger expenditure of *time* and *money* than mine?

2d. Wherein is a victory more certain by your plan than mine?

3d. Wherein is a victory *more valuable* by your plan than mine?

4th. In fact, would it not be *less* valuable in this, that it would break no great line of the enemy's communication, while mine would?

5th. In case of a disaster, would not a retreat be more difficult by your plan than mine?

Yours truly, ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

To this communication McClellan made an elaborate reply, discussing the situation very fully, and answering the inquiries apparently to the satisfaction of the President, who consented to the plan submitted by McClellan and concurred in by a council of his division commanders, by which the base of the Army of the Potomac should be transferred from Washington to the lower Chesapeake. Yet Lincoln must have had misgivings in the matter, for some weeks later he wrote to McClellan: "You will do me the justice to remember I always insisted that going down the bay in search of a field, instead of fighting at or near Manassas, was only shifting, and not surmounting, a difficulty; that we would find the same enemy, and the same or equal intrenchments, at either place."

After the transfer of the Army of the Potomac to the Peninsula there was great impatience at the delays in the expected advance on Richmond. The President shared this impatience, and his despatches to McClellan took an urgent and imperative though always friendly tone. April 9 he wrote: "Your despatches, complaining that you are not properly sustained, while they do not offend me, do pain me very much. I suppose the whole force which has gone forward for you is with you



by this time. And, if so, I think it is the precise time for you to *strike a blow*. By delay, the enemy will relatively gain upon you — that is, he will gain faster by fortifications and reinforcements than you can by reinforcements alone. And once more let me tell you, it is indispensable to you that you *strike a blow*. . . . I beg to assure you that I have never written to you or spoken to you in greater kindness of feeling than now, nor with a fuller purpose to sustain you, so far as, in my most anxious judgment, I consistently can. But you *must act*."

While Lincoln was thus imperative toward McClellan, he would not permit him to be unjustly criticized. Considerable ill-feeling having been developed between McClellan and Secretary Stanton, which was made worse by certain meddlesome persons in Washington, the President took occasion, at a public meeting, to express his views in these frank and manly words: "There has been a very wide-spread attempt to have a quarrel between General McClellan and the Secretary of War. Now, I occupy a position that enables me to observe that these two gentlemen are not nearly so deep in the quarrel as some pretending to be their friends. General McClellan's attitude is such that, in the very selfishness of his nature, he cannot but wish to be successful, as I hope he will be; and the Secretary of War is in precisely the same situation. If the military commanders in the field cannot be successful, not only the Secretary of War but myself, for the time being the master of them both, cannot but be failures. I know General McClellan wishes to be successful, and I know he does not wish it any more than the Secretary of War wishes it for him, and both of them together no more than I wish it. Sometimes we have a dispute about how many men General McClellan has had, and those who would disparage him say he

has had a very large number, and those who would disparage the Secretary of War insist that General McClellan has had a very small number. The basis for this is, there is always a wide difference, and on this occasion perhaps a wider one than usual, between the grand total on McClellan's rolls and the men actually fit for duty; and those who would disparage him talk of the grand total on paper, and those who would disparage the Secretary of War talk of those at present fit for duty. General McClellan has sometimes asked for things that the Secretary of War did not give him. General McClellan is not to blame for asking what he wanted and needed, and the Secretary of War is not to blame for not giving when he had none to give."

The summer of 1862 was a sad one for the country, and peculiarly sad for Lincoln. The Army of the Potomac fought battle after battle, often with temporary successes, but without apparent substantial results; while many thousands of our brave soldiers perished on the field, or filled the hospitals from the fever-swamps of the Chickahominy. The terrible realities of that dreadful summer, and their strain on Lincoln, are well shown in the following incident: Colonel Scott, of a New Hampshire regiment, had been ill, and his wife nursed him in the hospital. After his convalescence, he received leave of absence, and started for home; but by a steamboat collision in Hampton Roads, his noble wife was drowned. Colonel Scott reached Washington, and learning, a few days later, of the recovery of his wife's body, he requested permission of the Secretary of War to return for it. A great battle was imminent, and the request was denied. Colonel Scott thereupon sought the President. It was Saturday evening; and Lincoln, worn with the cares and anxieties of the week, sat alone in his room, coat thrown off, and seemingly lost in thought, perhaps pondering

the issue of the coming battle. Silently he listened to Colonel Scott's sad story; then, with an unusual irritation, which was probably a part of his excessive weariness, he exclaimed: "Am I to have no rest? Is there no hour or spot when or where I may escape these constant calls? Why do you follow me here with such business as this? Why do you not go to the War-office, where they have charge of all this matter of papers and transportation?" Colonel Scott told of Mr. Stanton's refusal; and the President continued: "Then probably you ought not to go down the river. Mr. Stanton knows all about the necessities of the hour; he knows what rules are necessary, and rules are made to be enforced. It would be wrong for me to override his rules and decisions in cases of this kind; it might work disaster to important movements. And then, you ought to remember that I have other duties to attend to — heaven knows, enough for one man! — and I can give no thought to questions of this kind. Why do you come here to appeal to my 'humanity'? Don't you know that we are in the midst of war? That suffering and death press upon all of us? That works of humanity and affection, which we would cheerfully perform in days of peace, are all trampled upon and outlawed by war? That there is no room left for them? There is but one duty now — *to fight*. The only call of humanity now is to conquer peace through unrelenting warfare. War, and war alone, is the duty of all of us. Your wife might have trusted you to the care which the Government has provided for its sick soldiers. At any rate, you must not vex me with your family troubles. Why, every family in the land is crushed with sorrow; but they must not each come to me for help. I have all the burden I can carry. Go to the War Department. Your business belongs there. If they cannot help you, then bear your burden, as

we all must, until this war is over. Everything must yield to the paramount duty of finishing the war." Colonel Scott withdrew, crushed and overwhelmed. The next morning, as he sat in his hotel pondering upon his troubles, he heard a rap at his door, and opening it found to his surprise the President standing before him. Grasping his hands impulsively and sympathetically, Lincoln broke out: "My dear Colonel, I was a brute last night. I have no excuse for my conduct. Indeed, I was weary to the last extent; but I had no right to treat a man with rudeness who had offered his life for his country, much more a man who came to me in great affliction. I have had a regretful night, and come now to beg your forgiveness." He added that he had just seen Secretary Stanton, and all the details were arranged for sending the Colonel down the Potomac and recovering the body; then, taking him in his carriage, he drove to the steamer's wharf, where, again pressing his hand, he wished him God-speed on his sad errand.

Such were Lincoln's harrowing experiences; and thus did his noble and sympathetic nature assert itself over his momentary weakness and depression.

In August of 1862 General McClellan was ordered to withdraw his army from the Peninsula. "With a heavy heart," says McClellan, "I relinquished the position gained at the cost of so much time and blood." Without being removed from his command, his troops were taken away from him and sent to join General Pope, who had been placed in command of a considerable force in Virginia, for the purpose of trying the President's favorite plan of an advance on Richmond by way of Manassas. Either from a confusion of orders or a lack of zeal in executing them, the Union forces failed to co-operate; and Pope's expected victory (Manassas, August 30) proved a disastrous and hu-

miliating defeat. His army was beaten and driven back on Washington in a rout little less disgraceful than that of Bull Run a year before. This battle came to be known as the "Second Bull Run."

Thus the autumn of 1862 set in amidst gloom, disorder, and dismay. Our armies in and around the national capital were on the defensive; while the victorious Lee, following up his successes at Manassas, was invading Maryland and threatening Washington and the North. The President was anxious; the Cabinet and Congress were alarmed. The troops had lost confidence in General Pope, and there was practically no one in chief command. The situation was most critical; but Lincoln faced it, as he always did, unflinchingly. He took what he felt to be the wisest and at the same time the most unpopular step possible under the circumstances: he placed McClellan in command of all the troops in and around Washington. It was a bold act, and required no ordinary amount of moral courage and self-reliance. Outside the army, it was about the most unpopular thing that could have been done. McClellan was disliked by all the members of the Cabinet and prominent officials, and with especial bitterness by Secretary Stanton. Secretary Welles speaks, in his Diary, of "Stanton's implacable hostility to McClellan," and records his belief that "Stanton is determined to destroy McClellan." Welles relates that on the very day of Pope's defeat at Manassas, Secretary Stanton, accompanied by Secretary Chase, called on him and asked him to join in signing a communication to the President demanding McClellan's immediate dismissal from command of the Army of the Potomac, saying all the members of the Cabinet would sign it. The document was in Stanton's handwriting. Welles, though far from friendly toward McClellan, refused to sign the paper, and the matter was

dropped. Welles adds the comment, "There was a fixed determination to remove, and, if possible, to disgrace, McClellan."

When it was rumored in Washington that McClellan was to be reinstated, everyone was thunderstruck. A Cabinet meeting was held on the second day of September, at which the President, without asking anyone's opinion, announced that he had reinstated McClellan. Regret and surprise were openly expressed. Mr. Stanton, with some excitement, remarked that no such order had issued from the War Department. The President then said, with great calmness, "No, Mr. Secretary, *the order was mine, and I will be responsible for it to the country.*" He added, by way of explanation, that, with a retreating and demoralized army tumbling in upon the capital, and alarm and panic in the community, something had to be done, and as there did not appear to be anyone else to do it he took the responsibility on himself. He remarked that McClellan had the confidence of the troops beyond any other officer, and could, under the circumstances, more speedily and effectually reorganize them and put them in fighting trim than any other general. "This is what is now wanted most," said he, "and these were my reasons for placing McClellan in command."

Perhaps at no other crisis of the war did Lincoln's strength of character and power of making quick and important decisions in the face of general opposition, come out more clearly than on this occasion. Secretary Welles, who was present at the dramatic and stormy Cabinet meeting referred to, says: "In stating what he had done, the President was deliberate, but firm and decisive. His language and manner were kind and affectionate, especially toward two of the members, who were greatly disturbed; but every person present felt that he was truly the chief, and every one knew

his decision was as fixed and unalterable as if given out with the imperious command and determined will of Andrew Jackson. A long discussion followed, closing with acquiescence in the decision of the President. In this instance the President, unaided by others, put forth with firmness and determination the executive will — the *one-man* power — against the temporary general sense of the community, as well as of his Cabinet, two of whom, it has been generally supposed, had with him an influence almost as great as the Secretary of State. They had been ready to make issue and resign their places unless McClellan was dismissed; but knowing their opposition, and in spite of it and of the general dissatisfaction in the community, the President had in that perilous moment exalted him to new and important trusts.”

It appears from the statement of General McClellan, made shortly before his death, that on the morning of his reinstatement (before the Cabinet meeting just described) the President visited him at his headquarters, near Washington, to ask if he would again assume command. “While at breakfast, at an early hour,” says McClellan, “I received a call from the President, accompanied by General Halleck. The President informed me that Colonel Kelton had returned and represented the condition of affairs as much worse than I had stated to Halleck on the previous day; that there were 30,000 stragglers on the roads; that the army was entirely defeated and falling back to Washington in confusion. He then said that he regarded Washington as lost, and asked me if I would, under the circumstances, consent to accept command of all the forces. Without a moment’s hesitation, and without making any conditions whatever, I at once said that I would accept the command, and would stake my life that I would save the city. Both the President and Halleck

again asserted their belief that it was impossible to save the city, and I repeated my firm conviction that I could and would save it. They then left, the President verbally placing me in entire command of the city and of the troops falling back upon it from the front."

The result of the reappointment of McClellan soon vindicated the wisdom of the step. He possessed the confidence of the army beyond any other general at that time, and was able to inspire it with renewed hope and courage. Leaving Washington on the 7th of September, in command of Pope's beaten and disintegrated forces which he had to reorganize on the march, he within two weeks met the flushed and lately victorious troops of Lee and Jackson and fought the bloody but successful battle of Antietam (September 17, 1862), which compelled Lee to retreat to the southern side of the Potomac, and relieved Washington of any immediate danger.

After the Antietam campaign, the Army of the Potomac rested awhile from its exhausting and disorganizing labors. Supplies and reinforcements were necessary before resuming active operations. This delay gave rise to no little dissatisfaction in Washington, where a clamor arose that McClellan should have followed up his successes at Antietam by immediately pursuing Lee into Virginia. In this dissatisfaction the President shared to some extent. He made a personal visit to the army for the purpose of satisfying himself of its condition. Of this occasion McClellan says: "On the first day of October, his Excellency the President honored the Army of the Potomac with a visit, and remained several days, during which he went through the different encampments, reviewed the troops, and went over the battle-field of South Mountain and Antietam. I had the opportunity, during this visit, to describe to him the operations of the army



since it left Washington, and gave him my reasons for not following the enemy after he recrossed the Potomac."

Before the grand review that was to be made by the President, some of McClellan's staff, knowing that the General was a man of great endurance and expertness in the saddle, laughed at the idea of Lincoln's attempting to keep up with him in the severe ordeal of "riding down the lines." "They rather hinted," says a narrator, "that the General would move somewhat rapidly, to test Mr. Lincoln's capacity as a rider. There were those on the field, however, who had seen Mr. Lincoln in the saddle in Illinois; and they were confident of his staying powers. A splendid black horse, very spirited, was selected for the President to ride. When the time came, Mr. Lincoln walked up to the animal, and the instant he seized the bridle to mount, it was evident to horsemen that he 'knew his business.' He had the animal in hand at once. No sooner was he in the saddle than the coal-black steed began to prance and whirl and dance as if he was proud of his burden. But the President sat as unconcerned and fixed to the saddle as if he and the horse were one. The test of endurance soon came. McClellan, with his magnificent staff, approached the President, who joined them, and away they dashed to a distant part of the field. The artillery began to thunder, the drums beat, and the bands struck up 'Hail to the Chief,' while the troops cheered. Mr. Lincoln, holding the bridle-rein in one hand, lifted his tall hat from his head, and much of the time held it in the other hand. Grandly did Lincoln receive the salute, appearing as little disturbed by the dashing movements of the proud-spirited animal as if he had passed through such an ordeal with the same creature many times before. Next came a further test of endurance — a long dash over very rough untraveled

ground, with here and there a ditch or a hole to be jumped or a siding to be passed. But Mr. Lincoln kept well up to McClellan, who made good time. Finally, the 'riding down the lines' was performed, amidst the flaunting of standards, the beating of drums, the loud cheering of the men and rapid discharges of artillery, startling even the best-trained horses. Lincoln sat easily to the end, when he wheeled his horse into position to witness the vast columns march in review. McClellan was surprised at so remarkable a display of horsemanship. Mr. Lincoln was a great lover of the horse, and a skilled rider. His awkwardness of form did not show in the saddle. He always looked well when mounted."

After the President's return to Washington he began urging McClellan to resume active operations; desiring him to "cross the Potomac, and give battle to the enemy or drive him south." On the 13th of October he addressed to him the long letter quoted at the end of the preceding chapter. Subsequent communications from the President to McClellan showed more and more impatience. On the 25th he telegraphed: "I have just read your despatch about sore-tongue and fatigued horses. Will you pardon me for asking what the horses of your army have done since the battle of Antietam that fatigues anything?" And the next day, after receiving McClellan's answer to his inquiry, he responded: "Most certainly I intend no injustice to anyone, and if I have done any I deeply regret it. To be told, after more than five weeks' total inaction of the army, and during which period we had sent to that army every fresh horse we possibly could, amounting in the whole to 7,918, that the cavalry horses were too much fatigued to move, presented a very cheerless, almost hopeless, prospect for the future, and it may have forced something of impatience into my

despatches. If not recruited and rested then, when could they ever be? *I suppose the river is rising, and I am glad to believe you are crossing.*" But McClellan did not cross; his preparations for a new campaign were not yet complete; and the President, at last losing patience, removed him from command, and put Burnside in his place, November 5, 1862. And a disastrous step this proved to be. Burnside was under peremptory orders from Washington to move immediately against the Confederate forces. The result was the ill-advised attack upon Fredericksburg (December 12, 1862) and Burnside's bloody repulse. The movement was made against the judgment of the army officers then, and has been generally condemned by military critics since. Secretary Welles thus guardedly commented upon it in his Diary: "It appears to me a mistake to fight the enemy in so strong a position. They have selected their own ground, and we meet them there." But it was McClellan's unwillingness to do the very thing that Burnside is censured for having done, and that proved so overwhelming a disaster, that was the occasion for McClellan's removal.

A good illustration of Lincoln's disappointed, perhaps unreasonable, state of mind before McClellan's removal is furnished by Hon. O. M. Hatch, a former Secretary of State of Illinois and an old friend of Lincoln's. Mr. Hatch relates that a short time before McClellan's removal from command he went with President Lincoln to visit the army, still near Antietam. They reached Antietam late in the afternoon of a very hot day, and were assigned a special tent for their occupancy during the night. "Early next morning," says Mr. Hatch, "I was awakened by Mr. Lincoln. It was very early — daylight was just lighting the east — the soldiers were all asleep in their tents. Scarce a sound could be heard except the notes of early birds,

and the farm-yard voices from distant farms. Lincoln said to me, 'Come, Hatch, I want you to take a walk with me.' His tone was serious and impressive. I arose without a word, and as soon as we were dressed we left the tent together. He led me about the camp, and then we walked upon the surrounding hills overlooking the great city of white tents and sleeping soldiers. Very little was spoken between us, beyond a few words as to the pleasantness of the morning or similar casual observations. Lincoln seemed to be peculiarly serious, and his quiet, abstract way affected me also. It did not seem a time to speak. We walked slowly and quietly, meeting here and there a guard, our thoughts leading us to reflect on that wonderful situation. A nation in peril — the whole world looking at America — a million men in arms — the whole machinery of war engaged throughout the country, while I stood by that kind-hearted, simple-minded man who might be regarded as the Director-General, looking at the beautiful sunrise and the magnificent scene before us. Nothing was to be said, nothing needed to be said. Finally, reaching a commanding point where almost that entire camp could be seen — the men were just beginning their morning duties, and evidences of life and activity were becoming apparent — we involuntarily stopped. The President, waving his hand towards the scene before us, and leaning towards me, said in an almost whispering voice: 'Hatch — Hatch, what is all this?' 'Why, Mr. Lincoln,' said I, 'this is the Army of the Potomac.' He hesitated a moment, and then, straightening up, said in a louder tone: 'No, Hatch, no. This is *General McClellan's body-guard*.' Nothing more was said. We walked to our tent, and the subject was not alluded to again."

## CHAPTER XXI

Lincoln and Slavery — Plan for Gradual Emancipation — Anti-slavery Legislation in 1862 — Pressure Brought to Bear on the Executive — The Delegation of Quakers — A Visit from Chicago Clergymen — Interview between Lincoln and Channing — Lincoln and Horace Greeley — The President's Answer to "The Prayer of Twenty Millions of People" — Conference between Lincoln and Greeley — Emancipation Resolved on — The Preliminary Proclamation — Lincoln's Account of It — Preparing for the Final Act — The Emancipation Proclamation — Particulars of the Great Document — Fate of the Original Draft — Lincoln's Outline of his Course and Views regarding Slavery.

THE emancipation of slaves in America — the crowning act of Lincoln's eventful career and the one with which his fame is most indissolubly linked — is a subject of supreme interest in a study of his life and character. For this great act all his previous life and training had been but a preparation. From the first awakening of his convictions of the moral wrong of human slavery, through all his public and private utterances, may be traced one logical and consistent development of the principles which at last found sublime expression in the Proclamation of Emancipation. In this, as always, he was true to his own inner promptings. He would not be hurried or worried or badgered into premature and impracticable measures. He bided his time; and when that time came the deed was done, unalterably and irrevocably: approved by the logic of events, and by the enlightened conscience of the world.

The final Emancipation Proclamation was issued on the first day of January, 1863. The various official

measures that preceded it may be briefly sketched, together with closely related incidents. As early as the autumn of 1861 the problem of the relation of the war to slavery was brought forcibly to the President's attention by the action of General J. C. Frémont, the Union commander in Missouri, who issued an order declaring the slaves of rebels in his department free. The order was premature and unauthorized, and the President promptly annulled it. General Frémont was thus, in a sense, the pioneer in military emancipation; and he lived to see the policy proposed by him carried into practical operation by all our armies. Lincoln afterwards said: "I have great respect for General Frémont and his abilities, but the fact is that the pioneer in any movement is not generally the best man to carry that movement to a successful issue. It was so in old times; Moses began the emancipation of the Jews, but didn't take Israel to the Promised Land after all. He had to make way for Joshua to complete the work. It looks as if the first reformer of a thing has to meet such a hard opposition and gets so battered and bespattered that afterward when people find they have to accept his reform they will accept it more easily from another man."

Lincoln at first favored a policy of gradual emancipation. In a special message to Congress, on the 6th of March, 1862, he proposed such a plan for the abolition of slavery. "In my judgment," he remarked, "gradual, and not sudden, emancipation is better for all." He suggested to Congress the adoption of a joint resolution declaring "that the United States ought to co-operate with any State which may adopt a gradual abolition of slavery, giving to such State pecuniary aid to compensate for the inconvenience, public and private, produced by such change of system." In conclusion he urged: "In full view of my great responsi-

bility to my God and to my country, I earnestly beg the attention of Congress and the people to this subject."

On the 16th of April of this year, Congress passed a bill abolishing slavery in the District of Columbia — a measure for which Lincoln had himself introduced a bill while a member of Congress. In confirming the act as President, he remarked privately: "Little did I dream in 1849, when as a member of Congress I proposed to abolish slavery at this capital, and could scarcely get a hearing for the proposition, that it would be so soon accomplished."

Emancipation measures moved rapidly in 1862. On June 19 Congress enacted a measure prohibiting slavery forever in all present and future territories of the United States. July 17 a law was passed authorizing the employment of negroes as soldiers, and conferring freedom on all who should render military service, and on the families of all such as belonged to disloyal owners. Two days later, in a conference appointed by him at the Executive Mansion, the President submitted to the members of Congress from the Border States a written appeal, in which he said:

Believing that you, in the border States, hold more power for good than any other equal number of members, I feel it a duty which I cannot justifiably waive, to make this appeal to you. . . . I intend no reproach or complaint when I assure you that, in my opinion, if you all had voted for the resolution in the gradual emancipation message of last March, the war would now be substantially ended. And the plan therein proposed is yet one of the most potent and swift means of ending it. Let the States which are in rebellion see definitely and certainly that in no event will the States you represent ever join their proposed confederacy, and they cannot much longer maintain the contest. . . . If

the war continues long, as it must if the object be not sooner attained, the institution in your States will be extinguished by mere friction and abrasion, by the mere incidents of the war. It will be gone, and you will have nothing valuable in lieu of it. Much of its value is gone already. How much better for you and for your people to take the step which at once shortens the war and secures substantial compensation for that which is sure to be wholly lost in any other event! How much better to thus save the money which else we sink forever in the war! How much better to do it while we can, lest the war ere long render us pecuniarily unable to do it! How much better for you as seller, and the nation as buyer, to sell out and buy out that without which the war could never have been, than to sink both the thing to be sold and the price of it in cutting one another's throats! . . . I do not speak of emancipation *at once*, but of a *decision* to emancipate *gradually*. . . . Upon these considerations I have again begged your attention to the message of March last. Before leaving the capital, consider and discuss it among yourselves. You are patriots and statesmen, and as such I pray you consider this proposition, and at the least commend it to the consideration of your States and people. As you would perpetuate popular government for the best people in the world, I beseech you that you do in nowise omit this. Our common country is in great peril, demanding the loftiest views and boldest action to bring a speedy relief. Once relieved, its form of government is saved to the world, its beloved history and cherished memories are vindicated, and its happy future fully assured and rendered inconceivably grand. To you, more than any others, the privilege is given to assure that happiness and swell that grandeur, and to link your own names therewith forever.

In an interview with Mr. Lovejoy and Mr. Arnold, of Illinois, the day following this conference, Lincoln



exclaimed: "Oh, how I wish the border States would accept my proposition! Then you, Lovejoy, and you, Arnold, and all of us, would not have lived in vain! The labor of your life, Lovejoy, would be crowned with success. You would live to see the end of slavery."

The first occasion on which the President definitely discussed emancipation plans with members of his Cabinet, according to Secretary Welles, was on the 13th of July, 1862. On that day, says Mr. Welles, "President Lincoln invited me to accompany him in his carriage to the funeral of an infant child of Mr. Stanton. Secretary Seward and Mrs. Frederick Seward were also in the carriage. Mr. Stanton occupied at that time for a summer residence the house of a naval officer, some two or three miles west or northwest of Georgetown. It was on this occasion and on this ride that he first mentioned to Mr. Seward and myself the subject of emancipating the slaves by proclamation in case the Rebels did not cease to persist in their war on the Government and the Union, of which he saw no evidence. He dwelt earnestly on the gravity, importance, and delicacy of the movement; said he had given it much thought, and had about come to the conclusion that it was a military necessity absolutely essential for the salvation of the Union; that we must free the slaves or be ourselves subdued, etc. . . . This was, the President said, the first occasion when he had mentioned the subject to anyone, and wished us to frankly state how the proposition struck us. Mr. Seward said the subject involved consequences so vast and momentous that he should wish to bestow on it mature reflection before giving a decisive answer; but his present opinion inclined to the measure as justifiable, and perhaps he might say expedient and necessary. These were also my views. Two or three times on that ride the subject, which was of course an ab-

sorbing one for each and all, was adverted to; and before separating, the President desired us to give the question special and deliberate attention, for he was earnest in the conviction that something must be done. It was a new departure for the President, for until this time, in all our previous interviews, whenever the question of emancipation or the mitigation of slavery had been in any way alluded to, he had been prompt and emphatic in denouncing any interference by the General Government with the subject. This was, I think, the sentiment of every member of the Cabinet, all of whom, including the President, considered it a local, domestic question, appertaining to the States respectively, who had never parted with their authority over it. But the reverses before Richmond, and the formidable power and dimensions of the insurrection, which extended through all the Slave States, and had combined most of them in a confederacy to destroy the Union, impelled the Administration to adopt extraordinary measures to preserve the national existence. The slaves, if not armed and disciplined, were in the service of those who were, not only as field laborers and producers, but thousands of them were in attendance upon the armies in the field, employed as waiters and teamsters, and the fortifications and intrenchments were constructed by them."

It has been shown again and again, by the words of Lincoln and by the testimony of his friends, that he heartily detested the practice of slavery, and would joyfully have set every bondman free. Before his nomination for the Presidency — indeed, from the very beginning of his public life — he had repeatedly put himself on record as opposed to slavery, but perhaps nowhere more tersely and unequivocally than in these words: "There is no reason in the world why the negro is not entitled to all the natural rights enumerated in

the Declaration of Independence — the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. *I hold that he is as much entitled to them as the white man.*" But his respect for the laws of the land deterred him from measures that might seem of doubtful constitutionality, and he waited patiently until the right hour had struck before he issued the edict of emancipation so eagerly demanded by a large class of earnest and loyal people at the North. Many of these people, misunderstanding his views and intentions, were very impatient; and their criticisms and expostulations were a constant burden to the sorely tried Executive.

In June of this year (1862) the President was waited on by a deputation of Quakers, or Friends, fifteen or twenty in number, who had been charged by the Yearly Meeting of their association to present a "minute" to the President on the subject of slavery and the duty of immediate emancipation. The visit of these excellent people was not altogether timely. Bad news had been received from McClellan's army on the Peninsula, and Lincoln was harassed with cares and anxieties. But he gave the deputation a cordial though brief greeting, as he announced that he was ready to hear from the Friends. In the reading of the minute, it appeared that the document took occasion to remind the President that, years before, he had said, "I believe that this Government cannot permanently endure half slave and half free," and from this was implied a suggestion of his failure to perform his duty as he had then seen it. Lincoln was decidedly displeased with this criticism; and after the document had been read to the close, he received it from the speaker, then drawing himself up, he said, with unusual severity of manner: "It is true that on the 17th of June, 1858, I said, 'I believe that this Government cannot permanently endure half slave and half free,'

but I said it in connection with other things from which it should not have been separated in an address discussing moral obligations; for this is a case in which the repetition of half a truth, in connection with the remarks just read, produces the effect of a whole falsehood. What I did say was, 'If we could first know where we are, and whither we are tending, we could better judge what to do and how to do it. We are now far into the fifth year since a policy was initiated with the avowed object and confident promise of putting an end to the slavery agitation. Under the operation of that policy this agitation has not only not ceased but has constantly augmented. In my opinion it will not cease until a crisis shall have been reached and passed. "A house divided against itself cannot stand." I believe that this Government cannot permanently endure half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved — I do not expect the house to fall — but I do expect that it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing or all the other. Either the opponents of slavery will arrest the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction, or its advocates will push it forward till it shall become alike lawful in all the States, old as well as new, North as well as South.' Take this statement as a whole, and it does not furnish a text for the homily to which this audience has listened."

As Lincoln concluded, he was turning away, when another member of the delegation, a woman, requested permission to detain him with a few words. Somewhat impatiently he said, "I will hear the Friend." Her remarks were a plea for the emancipation of the slaves, urging that he was the appointed minister of the Lord to do the work, and enforcing her argument by many Scriptural citations. At the close he asked, "Has the

Friend finished?" and receiving an affirmative answer, he said: "I have neither time nor disposition to enter into discussion with the Friend, and end this occasion by suggesting for her consideration the question whether, if it be true that the Lord has appointed me to do the work she has indicated, it is not probable that He would have communicated knowledge of the fact to me as well as to her?"

Something like the same views were expressed by Lincoln, on another occasion, when, in response to a memorial presented by a delegation representing most of the religious organizations of Chicago, he said, respectfully but pointedly: "I am approached with the most opposite opinions and advice, and by religious men who are certain they represent the Divine Will. . . . I hope it will not be irreverent in me to say that if it be probable that God would reveal His will to others, on a point so closely connected with my duty, it might be supposed he would reveal it directly to me. . . . If I can learn His will, I will do it. These, however, are not the days of miracles, and I suppose I am not to expect a direct revelation. I must study the plain physical facts of the case, and learn what appears to be wise and right. . . . Do not misunderstand me because I have mentioned these objections. They indicate the difficulties which have thus far prevented my action in some such way as you desire. I have not decided against a proclamation of emancipation, but hold the matter in advisement. The subject is in my mind by day and by night. Whatever shall appear to be God's will, I will do."

About this period the President had a very interesting conversation with Rev. William Henry Channing, in which the question of emancipation was frankly discussed. Mr. M. D. Conway, who was present at the interview, says: "Mr. Channing having begun by ex-

pressing his belief that the opportunity of the nation to rid itself of slavery had arrived, Mr. Lincoln asked how he thought they might avail themselves of it. Channing suggested emancipation, with compensation for the slaves. The President said he had for years been in favor of that plan. When the President turned to me, I asked whether we might not look to him as the coming deliverer of the nation from its one great evil? What would not that man achieve for mankind who should free America from slavery? He said, 'Perhaps we may be better able to do something in that direction after a while than we are now.' I said: 'Mr. President, do you believe the masses of the American people would hail you as their deliverer if, at the end of this war, the Union should be surviving and slavery still in it?' 'Yes, if they were to see that slavery was on the down hill.' I ventured to say: 'Our fathers compromised with slavery because they thought it on the down hill; hence war to-day.' The President said: 'I think the country grows in this direction daily, and I am not without hope that something of the desire of you and your friends may be accomplished. When the hour comes for dealing with slavery, *I trust I shall be willing to do my duty, though it costs my life.* And, gentlemen, lives will be lost.' These last words were said with a smile, yet with a sad and weary tone. During the conversation Mr. Lincoln recurred several times to Channing's suggestion of pecuniary compensation for emancipated slaves, and professed profound sympathy with the Southerners who, by no fault of their own, had become socially and commercially bound up with their peculiar institution. Being a Virginian myself, with many dear relatives and beloved companions of my youth in the Confederate ranks, I responded warmly to his kindly sentiments toward the South, albeit feeling more angry than he

seemed to be against the institution preying upon the land like a ghoul. I forget whether it was on this occasion or on a subsequent one when I was present that he said, in parting: 'We shall need all the anti-slavery feeling in the country, and more; you can go home and try to bring the people to your views; and you may say anything you like about me, if that will help. Don't spare me!' This was said with some laughter, but still in earnest."

One of the severest opponents of President Lincoln's policy regarding slavery was Horace Greeley. He criticized Lincoln freely in the New York "Tribune," of which he was editor, and said many harsh and bitter things of the administration. Lincoln took the abuse good-naturedly, saying on one occasion: "It reminds me of the big fellow whose little wife was wont to beat him over the head without resistance. When remonstrated with, the man said, 'Let her alone. It don't hurt me, and it does her a power of good.'"

In August, 1862, Mr. Greeley published a letter in the New York "Tribune," headed "The prayer of twenty millions of people," in which he urged the President, with extreme emphasis, to delay the act of emancipation no longer. Lincoln answered the vehement entreaty in the following calm, firm, and explicit words:

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON,  
Friday, Aug. 22, 1862.

HON. HORACE GREELEY.

DEAR SIR: I have just read yours of the 19th instant, addressed to myself, through the New York Tribune.

If there be in it any statements or assumptions of fact, which I may know to be erroneous, I do not now and here controvert them. If there be any inferences which I believe to be falsely drawn, I do not now and

here argue against them. If there be perceptible in it an impatient and dictatorial tone, I waive it, in deference to an old friend whose heart I have always supposed to be right.

As to the policy I "seem to be pursuing," as you say, I have not meant to leave anyone in doubt. I would save the Union. I would save it in the shortest way under the Constitution. The sooner the national authority can be restored, the nearer the Union will be — the Union as it was. If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time save slavery, I do not agree with them. If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time destroy slavery, I do not agree with them. *My paramount object is to save the Union, and not either to save or destroy slavery.* If I could save the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it. And if I could save it by freeing all the slaves, I would do it. And if I could save it by freeing some, and leaving others alone, I would do that.

What I do about slavery and the colored race, I do because I believe it helps to save the Union; and what I forbear, I forbear because I do not believe it would help to save the Union. I shall do less whenever I believe what I am doing hurts the cause; and shall do more whenever I believe doing more will help the cause. I shall try to correct errors, when shown to be errors; and I shall adopt new views, so fast as they shall appear to be true views.

I have here stated my purpose, according to my view of official duty, and I intend no modification of my oft-expressed personal wish that all men everywhere could be free.

Yours,  
A. LINCOLN.

Mr. Greeley being dissatisfied with Lincoln's explanation, and the "Tribune" still teeming with complaints and criticisms of the administration, Lincoln requested Mr. Greeley to come to Washington and make known in



person his complaints, to the end that they might be obviated if possible. The editor of the "Tribune" came. Lincoln said: "You complain of me. What have I done, or omitted to do, which has provoked the hostility of the 'Tribune'?" The reply was, "You should issue a proclamation abolishing slavery." Lincoln answered: "Suppose I do that. There are now twenty thousand of our muskets on the shoulders of Kentuckians, who are bravely fighting our battles. Every one of them will be thrown down or carried over to the rebels." The reply was: "Let them do it. The cause of the Union will be stronger if Kentucky should secede with the rest than it is now." Lincoln answered, "Oh, I can't think that."

It is evident that these solicitations and counsellings from outside persons were unnecessary and idle. Lincoln's far-seeing and practical mind had already grasped, more surely than had his would-be advisers, the ultimate wisdom and justice of the emancipation of the slaves. But he was resolved to do nothing rashly. He would wait till the time was ripe, and then abolish slavery on grounds that would be approved throughout the world: he would destroy slavery as a necessary step to the preservation of the Union. In the first year of the war he had said to a Southern Unionist, who warned him against meddling with slavery, "*You must not expect me to give up this Government without playing my last card.*" This "last card" was undoubtedly the freeing of the slaves; and when the time came, Lincoln played it unhesitatingly and triumphantly. How strong a card it was may be judged by a statement made in Congress by Mr. Ashmore, a Representative from South Carolina, who said shortly before the war: "The South can sustain more men in the field than the North can. *Her four millions of slaves alone will enable her to support an army of half a million.*" This

view makes the issue plain. If the South could maintain armies in the field supported, or partly supported, by slave labor, it was as much the right and the duty of the Government to destroy that support as to destroy an establishment for the manufacture of arms or munitions of war for the Southern armies. The logic of events had demonstrated the necessity and justice of the measure, and Lincoln now had with him a Cabinet practically united in its favor. The case was well stated by Secretary Welles — perhaps the most cool-headed and conservative member of Lincoln's Cabinet — at a Cabinet meeting held six or eight weeks after the Emancipation measure had been brought forward by the President. Mr. Welles, as he relates in his Diary, pointed out "the strong exercise of power" involved in the proposal, and denied the power of the Executive to take such a step under ordinary conditions. "But," said Mr. Welles, "the Rebels themselves had invoked war on the subject of slavery, had appealed to arms, and must abide the consequences." Mr. Welles admitted that it was "an extreme exercise of war powers" which he believed justifiable "under the circumstances, and in view of the condition of the country and the magnitude of the contest. The slaves were now an element of strength to the Rebels — were laborers, producers, and army attendants; they were considered as *property* by the Rebels, and *if property* they were subject to confiscation; if not property, but *persons* residing in the insurrectionary region, we should invite them as well as the whites to unite with us in putting down the Rebellion." This view was in the main concurred in by the Cabinet members present, and greatly heartened the President in his course. On the 22d of September, 1862, he issued what is known as the "Preliminary Proclamation." The text of this momentous document is as follows:

I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States of America, and Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy thereof, do hereby proclaim and declare that hereafter, as heretofore, the war will be prosecuted for the object of practically restoring the constitutional relations between the United States and each of the States and the people thereof, in which States that relation is or may be suspended or disturbed.

That it is my purpose, upon the next meeting of Congress, to again recommend the adoption of a practical measure tendering pecuniary aid to the free acceptance or rejection of all slave States, so called, the people whereof may not then be in rebellion against the United States, and which States may then have voluntarily adopted, or thereafter may voluntarily adopt, immediate or gradual abolishment of slavery within their respective limits; and that the effort to colonize persons of African descent, with their consent, upon this continent or elsewhere, with the previously obtained consent of the governments existing there, will be continued.

That on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever FREE; and the Executive government of the United States, including the military and naval authority thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of such persons, and will do no act or acts to repress such persons, or any of them, in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom.

That the Executive will, on the first day of January aforesaid, by proclamation, designate the States and parts of States, if any, in which the people thereof respectively shall then be in rebellion against the United States; and the fact that any State, or the people thereof, shall on that day be, in good faith, represented in the Congress of the United States by members

chosen thereto at elections wherein a majority of the qualified voters of such State shall have participated, shall, in the absence of strong countervailing testimony, be deemed conclusive evidence that such State, and the people thereof, are not in rebellion against the United States.

That attention is hereby called to an act of Congress entitled "An act to make an additional article of war," approved March 13, 1862, and which act is in the words and figures following:

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That hereafter the following shall be promulgated as an additional article of war, for the government of the army of the United States, and shall be obeyed and observed as such.

ARTICLE. — All officers or persons in the military or naval service of the United States are prohibited from employing any of the forces under their respective commands for the purpose of returning fugitives from service or labor who may have escaped from any persons to whom such service or labor is claimed to be due, and any officer who shall be found guilty by a court-martial of violating this article shall be dismissed from the service.

SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted,* That this act shall take effect from and after its passage.

Also to the ninth and tenth sections of an act entitled "An act to suppress insurrection, to punish treason and rebellion, to seize and confiscate property of rebels, and for other purposes," approved July 17, 1862, and which sections are in the words and figures following:

SEC. 9. *And be it further enacted,* That all slaves of persons who shall hereafter be engaged in rebellion against the government of the United States or who shall in any way give aid or comfort thereto, escaping from such persons and taking refuge within the lines of the army; and all slaves captured from such persons or deserted by them, and coming under the control of the government of the United States; and all slaves of such persons found *on* [or] being

within any place occupied by rebel forces, and afterwards occupied by the forces of the United States, shall be deemed captives of war, and shall be forever free of their servitude, and not again held as slaves.

SEC. 10. *And be it further enacted*, That no slave, escaping into any State, Territory, or the District of Columbia, from any other State, shall be delivered up, or in any way impeded or hindered of his liberty, except for crime, or some offense against the laws, unless the person claiming said fugitive shall first make oath that the person to whom the labor or service of such fugitive is alleged to be due is his lawful owner, and has not borne arms against the United States in the present rebellion, nor in any way given aid and comfort thereto; and no person engaged in the military or naval service of the United States shall, under any pretense whatever, assume to decide on the validity of the claim of any person to the service or labor of any other person, or surrender up any such person to the claimant, on pain of being dismissed from the service.

And I do hereby enjoin upon and order all persons engaged in the military and naval service of the United States to observe, obey, and enforce, within their respective spheres of service, the act and sections above recited.

And the Executive will in due time recommend that all the citizens of the United States who shall have remained loyal thereto throughout the rebellion, shall (upon the restoration of the constitutional relation between the United States and their respective States and people, if that relation shall have been suspended or disturbed) be compensated for all losses by acts of the United States, including the loss of slaves.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand, and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the city of Washington, this twenty-second day of September, in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two, and of the Independence of the United States the eighty-seventh.

*By the President:* ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

WILLIAM H. SEWARD, *Secretary of State.*

Lincoln's own account of this proclamation, and of the steps that led to it, is given as reported by Mr. F. B. Carpenter. "It had," said Lincoln, "got to be midsummer, 1862. Things had gone on from bad to worse, until I felt that we had reached the end of our rope on the plan of operations we had been pursuing; that we must change our tactics and play our last card, or lose the game. I now determined upon the adoption of the emancipation policy; and, without consultation with, or the knowledge of, the Cabinet, I prepared the original draft of the proclamation, and, after much anxious thought, called a Cabinet meeting upon the subject. This was the last of July, or the first part of the month of August, 1862. This Cabinet meeting took place, I think, upon a Saturday. All were present excepting Mr. Blair, the Postmaster-general, who was absent at the opening of the discussion, but came in subsequently. I said to the Cabinet that I had resolved upon this step, and had called them together, not to ask their advice, but to lay the subject-matter of a proclamation before them; suggestions as to which would be in order, after they had heard it read. Mr. Lovejoy was in error when he informed you that it excited no comment, excepting on the part of Secretary Seward. Various suggestions were offered. Secretary Chase wished the language stronger in reference to the arming of the blacks. Mr. Blair, after he came in, deprecated the policy, on the ground that it would cost the administration the fall elections. Nothing, however, was offered that I had not already fully anticipated and settled in my own mind, until Secretary Seward spoke. He said in substance: 'Mr. President, I approve of the proclamation, but I question the expediency of its issue at this juncture. The depression of the public mind, consequent upon our repeated reverses, is so great that I

fear the effect of so important a step. It may be viewed as the last measure of an exhausted government, a cry for help; the government stretching forth its hands to Ethiopia, instead of Ethiopia stretching forth her hands to the government.' 'His idea,' said the President, 'was that it would be considered our last *shriek* on the retreat.' (This was his precise expression.) 'Now,' continued Mr. Seward, 'while I approve the measure, I suggest, sir, that you postpone its issue until you can give it to the country supported by military success, instead of issuing it, as would be the case now, upon the greatest disasters of the war!'" Lincoln continued: "The wisdom of the view of the Secretary of State struck me with very great force. It was an aspect of the case that, in all my thought upon the subject, I had entirely overlooked. The result was that I put the draft of the proclamation aside, waiting for a victory. From time to time I added or changed a line, touching it up here and there, anxiously waiting the progress of events. Well, the next news we had was of Pope's disaster at Bull Run. Things looked darker than ever. Finally, came the week of the battle of Antietam. I determined to wait no longer.<sup>1</sup> The news came, I think, on Wednesday, that the advantage was on our side. I was then staying at the Soldiers' Home (three miles out of Washington). Here I finished writing the second draft of the preliminary proclamation; came up on Saturday; called the Cabinet together to hear it; and it was published the following Monday."

<sup>1</sup> Hon. George S. Boutwell of Massachusetts stated Lincoln said to him personally: "When Lee came over the river, I made a resolution that if McClellan drove him back I would send the proclamation after him. The battle of Antietam was fought Wednesday, and until Saturday I could not find out whether we had gained a victory or lost a battle. It was then too late to issue the proclamation that day; and the fact is, I fixed it up a little on Sunday, and Monday I let them have it."

Another interesting incident occurred at this Cabinet meeting in connection with Secretary Seward. The President had written the important part of the proclamation in these words: "That on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever FREE; and the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authority thereof, will *recognize* the freedom of such persons, and will do no act or acts to repress such persons, or any of them, in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom." "When I finished reading this paragraph," remarked Lincoln, "Mr. Seward stopped me, and said, 'I think, Mr. President, that you should insert after the word "*recognize*" "*and maintain.*"' I replied that I had already fully considered the import of that expression in this connection, but I had not introduced it, because it was not my way to promise what I was not entirely *sure* that I could perform, and I was not prepared to say that I thought we were exactly able to maintain this. But Seward insisted that we ought to take this ground, and the words finally went in."

The special Cabinet meeting to which Lincoln here refers was one of uncommon interest even in that day of heroic things. An account of it is given by Secretary Welles, who was present. "At the Cabinet meeting of September 22," says Mr. Welles in his Diary, "the special subject was the Proclamation for emancipating the slaves after a certain date, in States that shall then be in rebellion. For several weeks the subject has been suspended, but the President says never lost sight of. In taking up the Proclamation, the President stated that the question was finally decided,



the act and the consequences were his, but that he felt it due to us to make us acquainted with the fact and to invite criticism on the paper which he had prepared. There were, he had found, not unexpectedly, some differences in the Cabinet, but he had, after ascertaining in his own way the views of each and all, individually and collectively, formed his own conclusions and made his own decisions. In the course of the discussion on this paper, which was long, earnest, and, on the general principle involved, harmonious, he remarked that he had made a vow, a covenant, that if God gave us the victory in the approaching battle, he would consider it an indication of Divine will, and that it was his duty to move forward in the cause of emancipation. It might be thought strange, he said, that he had in this way submitted the disposal of important matters when the way was not clear to his mind what he should do. God had decided his questions in favor of the slaves. He was satisfied it was right; and he was confirmed and strengthened in his action by the vow and the results. His mind was fixed, his decision made, but he wished his paper announcing his course to be as correct in terms as it could be made without any change in his determination. He read the document. One or two unimportant amendments suggested by Seward were approved. It was then handed to the Secretary of State to publish to-morrow."

The discussion of Emancipation brought up at once the problem of what should be done with the freed negroes. The very next day after the preliminary proclamation was issued (September 23, 1862), the President presented the matter to the assembled Cabinet. Deportation was considered, and some of those present urged that this should be compulsory. The President, however, would not consider this; the emigration of the negroes, he said, must be voluntary, and

without expense to themselves. It was proposed to deport the freedmen to Costa Rica, where a large tract of land (known as the Chiriqui Grant) had been obtained from the government of Central America. Lincoln favored this in a general way. He "thought it essential to provide an asylum for a race which we had emancipated but which could never be recognized or admitted to be our equals," says Mr. Welles. But there was some doubt as to the validity of the title to the Costa Rica lands, and the matter was dropped.

In his second annual message to Congress, transmitted to that body in December, 1862, Lincoln touched, in conclusion, upon the great subject of Emancipation, in these words of deep import:

I do not forget the gravity which should characterize a paper addressed to the Congress of the nation by the Chief Magistrate of the nation. Nor do I forget that some of you are my seniors, nor that many of you have more experience than I in the conduct of public affairs. Yet I trust that in view of the great responsibility resting upon me, you will perceive no want of respect to yourselves in any undue earnestness I may seem to display. . . . The dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate to the stormy present. The occasion is piled high with difficulty, and we must rise with the occasion. As our case is new, so we must think anew and act anew.

Fellow citizens, we cannot escape history. We of this Congress and this administration will be remembered in spite of ourselves. No personal significance, or insignificance, can spare one or another of us. The fiery trial through which we pass will light us down, in honor or dishonor, to the latest generation. We say we are for the Union. The world will not forget that we say this. We know how to save the Union. The world knows we do know how to save it. We — even we here — hold the power and bear the responsibility.

In giving freedom to the slave we assure freedom to the free — honorable alike in what we give and what we preserve. We shall nobly save, or meanly lose, the last best hope of earth. Other means may succeed, this could not fail. The way is plain, peaceful, generous, just — a way which, if followed, the world will forever applaud, and God must forever bless.

An immense concourse attended the reception at the White House on the first day of 1863, and the President stood for several hours shaking hands with the endless train of men and women who pressed forward to greet him. The exhausting ceremonial being ended, the proclamation which finally and forever abrogated the institution of slavery in the United States was handed to him for his signature. "Mr. Seward," remarked the President, "I have been shaking hands all day, and my right hand is almost paralyzed. If my name ever gets into history, it will be for this act, and my whole soul is in it. If my hand trembles when I sign the proclamation, those who examine the document hereafter will say I hesitated." Then, resting his arm a moment, he turned to the table, took up the pen, and slowly and firmly wrote, ABRAHAM LINCOLN. He smiled as, handing the paper to Mr. Seward, he said, "That will do." A few hours after, he remarked: "The signature looks a little tremulous, for my hand was tired; but my resolution was firm. I told them in September that if they did not return to their allegiance I would strike at this pillar of their strength. And now the promise shall be kept, and not one word of it will I ever recall."

The text of the great Emancipation Proclamation is as follows:

Whereas, on the 22d day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two,

a proclamation was issued by the President of the United States, containing, among other things, the following, to-wit:

That on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any States or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward and forever free; and the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authority thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of such persons, and will do no act or acts to repress such persons, or any of them, in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom.

That the Executive will, on the first day of January aforesaid, by proclamation, designate the States and parts of States, if any, in which the people thereof respectively shall then be in rebellion against the United States; and the fact that any State, or the people thereof, shall on that day be in good faith represented in the Congress of the United States, by members chosen thereto at elections wherein a majority of the qualified voters of such State shall have participated, shall, in the absence of strong countervailing testimony, be deemed conclusive evidence that such State, and the people thereof, are not then in rebellion against the United States.

Now, therefore, I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, by virtue of the power in me vested as Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States in time of actual armed rebellion against the authority and Government of the United States, and as a fit and necessary war measure for suppressing said rebellion, do, on this first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and in accordance with my purpose so to do, publicly proclaimed for the full period of one hundred days, from the day first above mentioned, order and designate as the States and parts of States wherein the people thereof respectively are this day in rebellion

against the United States, the following, to-wit: Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana (except the parishes of St. Bernard, Plaquemines, Jefferson, St. John, St. Charles, St. James, Ascension, Assumption, Terre Bonne, Lafourche, Ste. Marie, St. Martin, and Orleans, including the city of New Orleans), Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia (except the forty-eight counties designated as West Virginia, and also the counties of Berkeley, Accomac, Northampton, Elizabeth City, York, Princess Anne, and Norfolk, including the cities of Norfolk and Portsmouth), and which excepted parts are for the present left precisely as if this proclamation were not issued.

And by virtue of the power and for the purpose aforesaid, I do order and declare that all persons held as slaves within said designated States and parts of States are and henceforward shall be FREE; and that the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authorities thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of said persons.

And I hereby enjoin upon the people so declared to be free to abstain from all violence, unless in necessary self-defense; and I recommend to them that, in all cases when allowed, they labor faithfully for reasonable wages.

And I further declare and make known that such persons, of suitable condition, will be received into the armed service of the United States to garrison forts, positions, stations, and other places, and to man vessels of all sorts in said service.

And upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice, warranted by the Constitution, upon military necessity, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind and the gracious favor of Almighty God.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my name, and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the City of Washington, this first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight

hundred and sixty-three, and of the independence of the United States the eighty-seventh.

*By the President:* ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

WILLIAM H. SEWARD, Secretary of State.

It is stated that Lincoln gave the most earnest study to the composition of the Emancipation Proclamation. He realized, as he afterwards said, that the proclamation was the central act of his administration and the great event of the nineteenth century. When the document was completed a printed copy of it was placed in the hands of each member of the Cabinet, and criticisms and suggestions were invited. Mr. Chase remarked: "This paper is of the utmost importance, greater than any state paper ever made by this Government. A paper of so much importance, and involving the liberties of so many people, ought, I think, to make some reference to Deity. I do not observe anything of the kind in it." Lincoln said: "No, I overlooked it. Some reference to Deity must be inserted. Mr. Chase, won't you make a draft of what you think ought to be inserted?" Mr. Chase promised to do so, and at the next meeting presented the following: "And upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice, warranted by the Constitution, upon military necessity, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind and the gracious favor of Almighty God." When Lincoln read the paragraph, Mr. Chase said: "You may not approve it, but I thought this, or something like it, would be appropriate." Lincoln replied: "I do approve it; it cannot be bettered, and I will adopt it in the very words you have written."

To a large concourse of people who, two days after the proclamation was issued, assembled before the White House, with music, the President said: "What I did, I did after a very full deliberation, and under

a heavy and solemn sense of responsibility. I can only trust in God I have made no mistake." That he realized to the full the gravity of the step before taking it is shown again in an incident related by Hon. John Covode, who, calling on the President a few days before the issue of the final proclamation, found him walking his room in considerable agitation. Reference being made to the forthcoming proclamation, Lincoln said with great earnestness: "I have studied that matter well; my mind is made up — it *must be done*. I am driven to it. There is to me no other way out of our troubles. But although my duty is plain, it is in some respects painful, and I trust the people will understand that I act not in anger but in expectation of a greater good."

Mr. Ben. Perley Poore makes the interesting statement that "Mr. Lincoln carefully put away the pen which he had used in signing the document, for Mr. Sumner, who had promised it to his friend, George Livermore, of Cambridge, the author of an interesting work on slavery. It was a steel pen with a wooden handle, the end of which had been gnawed by Mr. Lincoln — a habit that he had when composing anything that required thought."

In response to a request of the ladies in charge of the Northwestern Fair for the Sanitary Commission, which was held in Chicago in the autumn of 1863, Lincoln conveyed to them the original draft of the proclamation; saying, in his note of presentation, "I had some desire to retain the paper; but if it shall contribute to the relief or comfort of the soldiers, that will be better." The document was purchased at the Fair by Mr. Thomas B. Bryan, and given by him to the Chicago Historical Society. It perished in the great fire of October, 1871.

More than a year after the issue of the Emancipa-

tion Proclamation, Lincoln, in writing to a prominent Kentucky Unionist, gave a synopsis of his views and course regarding slavery, which is so clear in statement, and so forceful and convincing in logic, that a place must be given it in this chapter.

I am naturally anti-slavery. If slavery is not wrong, nothing is wrong. I cannot remember when I did not so think and feel; and yet I have never understood that the Presidency conferred upon me an unrestricted right to act officially upon this judgment and feeling. It was in the oath I took that I would, to the best of my ability, preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States. I could not take the office without taking the oath. Nor was it my view that I might take an oath to get power, and break the oath in using the power. I understood, too, that in ordinary civil administration this oath even forbade me to practically indulge my primary abstract judgment on the moral question of slavery. I had publicly declared this many times and in many ways. And I aver that, to this day, I have done no official act in mere deference to my abstract judgment and feeling on slavery. I did understand, however, that my oath to preserve the Constitution to the best of my ability imposed upon me the duty of preserving, by every indispensable means, that Government — that Nation of which that Constitution was the organic law. Was it possible to lose the nation and yet preserve the Constitution? By general law, life *and* limb must be protected; yet often a limb must be amputated to save a life; but a life is never wisely given to save a limb. I felt that measures, otherwise unconstitutional, might become lawful, by becoming indispensable to the preservation of the Constitution, through the preservation of the nation. Right or wrong, I assumed this ground, and now avow it. I could not feel that, to the best of my ability, I had even tried to preserve the Constitution, if, to save slavery, or any minor matter, I should permit the



wreck of government, country, and constitution, altogether. When, early in the war, General Frémont attempted military emancipation, I forbade it, because I did not then think it an indispensable necessity. When a little later, General Cameron, then Secretary of War, suggested the arming of the blacks, I objected, because I did not yet think it an indispensable necessity. When, still later, General Hunter attempted military emancipation, I again forbade it, because I did not yet think the indispensable necessity had come. When, in March and May and July, 1862, I made earnest and successive appeals to the border States to favor compensated emancipation, I believed the indispensable necessity for military emancipation and arming the blacks would come, unless averted by that measure. They declined the proposition; and I was, in my best judgment, driven to the alternative of either surrendering the Union, and with it the Constitution, or of laying strong hand upon the colored element. I chose the latter. In choosing it, I hoped for greater gain than loss; but of this I was not entirely confident. More than a year of trial now shows no loss by it in our foreign relations, none in our home popular sentiment, none in our white military force, no loss by it anyhow or anywhere. On the contrary, it shows a gain of quite a hundred and thirty thousand soldiers, seamen, and laborers. These are palpable facts, about which, as facts, there can be no cavilling. We have the men; and as we could not have had them without the measure.

And now let any Union man who complains of the measure, test himself by writing down in one line that he is for subduing the rebellion by force of arms; and in the next, that he is for taking three hundred and thirty thousand men from the Union side, and placing them where they would be but for the measure he condemns. If he cannot face his case so stated, it is only because he cannot face the truth.

I attempt no compliment to my own sagacity. I claim not to have controlled events, but confess plainly

that events have controlled me. Now, at the end of three years' struggle, the nation's condition is not what either party or any man devised or expected. God alone can claim it. Whither it is tending seems plain. If God now wills the removal of a great wrong, and wills also that we of the North, as well as you of the South, shall pay fairly for our complicity in that wrong, impartial history will find therein new causes to attest and revere the justice and goodness of God.

Yours truly,      A. LINCOLN.

## CHAPTER XXII

President and People — Society at the White House in 1862-3 — The President's Informal Receptions — A Variety of Callers — Characteristic Traits of Lincoln — His Ability to Say No when Necessary — Would not Countenance Injustice — Good Sense and Tact in Settling Quarrels — His Shrewd Knowledge of Men — Getting Rid of Bores — Loyalty to his Friends — Views of his Own Position — "Attorney for the People" — Desire that they Should Understand him — His Practical Kindness — A Badly Scared Petitioner — Telling a Story to Relieve Bad News — A Breaking Heart beneath the Smiles — His Deeply Religious Nature — The Changes Wrought by Grief.

**I**N a work which is not intended to cover fully the events of a great historic period, but rather to trace out the life of a single individual connected with that period, much must be included which, although not possessing special historical significance, cannot be overlooked in a personal study of the subject of the biography. Lincoln's life as President was by no means made up of Cabinet meetings, official messages and proclamations, or reviews of armies; interspersed with these conspicuous acts was a multitude of less heroic but scarcely less interesting details, with incidents and experiences humorous or sad, but all, even the most trivial, being expressions of the life and character of the man whom we are seeking to portray.

"Society," as now understood at the national capital, had but little existence during the war. At the White House there were the usual President's receptions, which were quite public in character and were largely attended. Aside from these democratic gatherings there was little enough of gaiety. The feeling that prevailed is shown by an incident that occurred

during the winter of 1862-3, when a good deal of clamor was raised over a party given by Mrs. Lincoln, at which, it was asserted, dancing was indulged in; and Mrs. Lincoln was severely censured for what was regarded as inexcusable frivolity. Hon. A. G. Riddle, who was present on the occasion referred to, states positively that there was no dancing; the party was a quiet one, intended only to relieve the rather dull and formal receptions. But the President was pained by the rumors that "fashionable balls" were permitted at the White House in war-time; and the party was not repeated.

It was the custom of President Lincoln to open, twice a week, the doors of his office in the Executive Mansion for the admission of all visitors who might wish to speak with him. These brief interviews, quite devoid of ceremony, seemed to reveal the man in his true character, and to set forth the salient traits that fitted him for his great position, and endeared him so greatly to the popular heart. They showed how easily accessible he was to all classes of citizens, how readily he could adapt himself to people of any station or degree, how deep and true were his human sympathies, how quickly and keenly he could discriminate character, and how heartily he detested meanness and all unworthy acts and appliances to compass a selfish or sordid end. On these occasions, as may well be imagined, many curious incidents occurred. Lincoln was usually clad "in a black broadcloth suit, nothing in his dress betokening disregard of conventionality, save perhaps his neat cloth slippers, which were doubtless worn for comfort. He was seated beside a plain cloth-covered table, in a commodious arm-chair." As each visitor approached the President he was greeted with an encouraging nod and smile, and a few moments were cordially given him in which to state the object

of the visit; the President listening with the most respectful and patient attention, and deciding each case with tact, sympathy, and good humor. "His *Yes*," says Mr. Riddle, "was most gracious and satisfactory; his *No*, when reached, was often spoken by the petitioner, and left only a soothed disappointment. He saw the point of a case unerringly. He had a confidence in the homely views and speech of the common people, with whom his heart and sympathies ever were."

At these informal meetings with people who usually wanted some favor from him, no case was too trivial to receive his attention. Taking advantage of the opportunity, there came one day, says Mr. C. Van Santvoord, "a sturdy, honest-looking German soldier, minus a leg, who hobbled up to the President on crutches. In consideration of his disabled condition, he wanted some situation about Washington, the duties of which he might be able to discharge; and he had come to the President, hoping that he would provide the desired situation for him. On being interrogated as to how he had lost his leg, he answered that it was the effect of a wound received in battle, mentioning the time and the place. 'Let me look at your papers,' said Mr. Lincoln. The man replied that he had none, and that he supposed his word would be sufficient. 'What!' exclaimed the President, 'no papers, no credentials, nothing to show how you lost your leg! How am I to know that you did not lose it by a trap after getting into somebody's orchard?' This was spoken with a droll expression which amused the bystanders, all except the applicant, who with a very solemn visage earnestly protested the truth of his statement, muttering something about the reasons for not being able to produce his papers. 'Well, well,' said the President, 'it is a little risky for an army man to be wandering around without papers to show where he belongs and

what he is, but I will see what can be done for you.' And taking a blank card from a little pile of similar blanks on the table, he wrote some lines upon it, addressed it, and handing it to the man bade him deliver it to a certain quartermaster, who would attend to his case."

The President could, however, be emphatic and even severe when necessary on such occasions. One day, we are told, "he was approached by a man apparently sixty years of age, with dress and manner which showed that he was acquainted with the usages of good society, whose whole exterior, indeed, would have favorably impressed people who form opinions from appearances. The object of his visit was to solicit aid in some commission project, for the success of which Mr. Lincoln's favor was regarded as essential. The President heard him patiently, but demurred against being connected with or countenancing the affair, suggesting mildly that the applicant would better set up an office of the kind described, and run it in his own way and at his own risk. The man pleaded his advanced years and obscurity as a reason for not attempting this, but said if the President would only let him use his name to advertise and recommend the enterprise, he would then, he thought, need nothing more. At this the eyes of the President flashed with sudden indignation, and his whole aspect and manner underwent a portentous change. 'No!' he broke forth, with startling vehemence, springing from his seat under the impulse of his emotion. 'No! I'll have nothing to do with this business, nor with any man who comes to me with such degrading propositions. What! Do you take the President of the United States to be a commission broker? You have come to the wrong place; and for you and every one who comes for such purposes, there is the door!' The man's face blanched as he cowered

and slunk away confounded, without uttering a word. The President's wrath subsided as speedily as it had risen."

Another example of Lincoln's power to dispose summarily of people who tried his patience too far is given by Secretary Welles, who records that a Mrs. White — a sister or half-sister of Mrs. Lincoln — made herself so obnoxious as a Southern sympathizer in Washington in 1864, that the President sent her word that "if she did not leave forthwith she might expect to find herself within twenty-four hours in the Old Capitol Prison."

With all his kindness and desire to do what was asked of him, Lincoln could not be persuaded to consent to anything which he felt to be distinctly wrong, regardless of any unfavorable consequences which his refusal might bring upon himself. When the members of Congress from Minnesota, late in 1862, called on him in a body to urge him to order the execution of three hundred Indian prisoners, captured in their State and charged with great atrocities, he positively refused, although realizing that it might cost him the support of those members of the House, which he greatly needed at that time.

"The President is always disposed to mitigate punishments and grant favors," says a member of his Cabinet. "As a matter of duty and friendship, I one day mentioned to him the case of Laura Jones, a young lady residing in Richmond and there engaged to be married, who came up three years ago to attend her sick mother and had been unable to pass through the lines and return. A touching appeal was made by the poor girl, who truly says her youth is passing. The President at once said he would give her a pass. I told him her sympathies were with the secessionists. But he said he would let her go; the war had depopulated

the country and prevented marriages enough, and if he could do a kindness of this sort he would do it."

Another applicant for a pass through the lines was less fortunate than the one just noted. One day, in the spring of 1862, a gentleman from some Northern city entered Lincoln's private office, and earnestly requested a pass to Richmond. "A pass to Richmond!" exclaimed the President. "Why, my dear sir, if I should give you one it would do you no good. You may think it very strange, but there's a lot of fellows between here and Richmond who either can't read or are prejudiced against every man who totes a pass from me. I have given McClellan and more than two hundred thousand others passes to Richmond, *and not a single one of 'em has got there yet!*"

Lincoln sometimes had a very effective way of dealing with men who asked troublesome or improper questions. A visitor once asked him how many men the rebels had in the field. The President replied, very seriously, "*Twelve hundred thousand*, according to the best authority." The interrogator blanched in the face, and ejaculated, "Good heavens!" "Yes, sir, twelve hundred thousand — no doubt of it. You see, all of our generals, when they get whipped, say the enemy outnumbered them from three or five to one, and I must believe them. We have four hundred thousand men in the field, and three times four makes twelve. Don't you see it?"

Among the many illustrations of the sturdy sense and firmness of Lincoln's character, the following should be recorded: During the early part of 1863 the Union men in Missouri were divided into two factions, which waged a bitter controversy with each other. General Curtis, commander of the military district comprising Missouri, Kansas, and Arkansas, was at the head of one faction, while Governor Gamble led the other.



Their differences were a source of great embarrassment to the Government at Washington, and of harm to the Union cause. The President was in constant receipt of remonstrances and protests from the contesting parties, to one of which he made the following curt reply:

Your despatch of to-day is just received. It is very painful to me that you in Missouri cannot, or will not, settle your factional quarrel among yourselves. I have been tormented with it beyond endurance, for months, by both sides. Neither side pays the least respect to my appeals to reason. I am now compelled to take hold of the case.

A. LINCOLN.

The President promptly followed up this warning by removing General Curtis, and appointing in his place General Schofield, to whom he soon after addressed the following letter:

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON,  
May 27, 1863.

GENERAL J. M. SCHOFIELD.

DEAR SIR: Having removed General Curtis and assigned you to the command of the Department of the Missouri, I think it may be of some advantage to me to state to you why I did it. I did not remove General Curtis because of my full conviction that he had done wrong by commission or omission. I did it because of a conviction in my mind that the Union men of Missouri, constituting, when united, a vast majority of the people, have entered into a pestilent, factious quarrel among themselves; General Curtis, perhaps not of choice, being the head of one faction, and Governor Gamble that of the other. After months of labor to reconcile the difficulty, it seemed to grow worse and worse, until I felt it my duty to break it up somehow, and as I could not remove Governor Gamble, I had to remove General Curtis. Now that you are in the position, I wish you to undo nothing merely because

General Curtis or Governor Gamble did it, but to exercise your own judgment, and do right for the public interest. Let your military measures be strong enough to repel the invaders and keep the peace, and not so strong as to unnecessarily harass and persecute the people. It is a difficult *rôle*, and so much greater will be the honor if you perform it well. If both factions, or neither, shall abuse you, you will probably be about right. Beware of being assailed by one and praised by the other.

Yours truly,      A. LINCOLN.

Firm and unyielding as he was when necessity compelled him to be, Lincoln was by nature a peace-maker, and was ever anxious that personal differences be adjusted happily. In his efforts to this end he never failed to show tact and shrewdness, and would if necessary sacrifice his own preferences in the interests of peace and harmony. A characteristic instance of the exercise of these traits occurred in connection with the Missouri troubles just referred to. General Schofield's course in command of his department proved satisfactory, and he had been nominated for a Major-General's commission. He was, however, a somewhat conservative man, and in spite of his efforts to carry out the President's injunctions of impartiality, he had given offense to certain Missouri radicals, who now opposed his promotion, and were able to exert sufficient influence in the Senate to prevent the confirmation of his appointment as a Major-General. The Missouri delegation appealed to the more radical Senators, and the nomination was "hung up" for about six weeks. Lincoln was very desirous that it should be confirmed, and the Missouri Congressmen were equally bent on its defeat. In this dilemma, Lincoln sent for Senator Zack Chandler of Michigan, and proposed a compromise. "General Rosecrans," said he, "has a great many friends;

he fought the battle of Stone River and won a brilliant victory, and his advocates begin to grumble about his treatment. Now, I will tell you what I have been thinking about. If you will confirm Schofield in the Senate, I will remove him from the command in Missouri and send him down to Sherman. That will satisfy the radicals. Then I will send Rosecrans to Missouri, and that will please the latter's friends. In this way the whole thing can be harmonized." As soon as the Senate grasped the plan of the President there was no longer any opposition to the confirmation of Schofield. He was sent to join Sherman in the South, Rosecrans was appointed to the command in Missouri, and everything worked harmoniously and pleasantly as the President had predicted and desired.

Secretary Welles remarks that "the President was a much more shrewd and accurate observer of the characteristics of men — better and more correctly formed an estimate of their power and capabilities — than the Secretary of State or most others. Those in the public service he closely scanned, but was deliberate in forming a conclusion adverse to any one he had appointed. In giving or withdrawing confidence he was discriminating and just in his final decision, careful never to wound unnecessarily the sensibilities of any of their infirmities, always ready to praise, but nevertheless firm and resolute in discharging the to him always painful duty of censure, reproof, or dismissal." As an instance of this sure judgment of the abilities and characters of men, Mr. Welles gives an anecdote relating to the naval movement under Admiral Du Pont, against Charleston, S. C. "One day," says Mr. Welles, "the President said to me that he had but slight expectation that we should have any great success from Du Pont. 'He, as well as McClellan,' said Mr. Lincoln, 'hesitates — has *the slows*. McClellan always wanted more regi-

ments; Du Pont is everlastingly asking for more gunboats — more iron-clads. He will do nothing with any. He has intelligence and system and will maintain a good blockade. You did well in selecting him for that command, but he will never take Sumter or get to Charleston. He is no Farragut, though unquestionably a good routine officer, who obeys orders and in a general way carries out his instructions.'” The outcome of events proved the soundness of Lincoln's judgment.

Loyalty to his friends was always a strong trait of Lincoln's character. It was put to the proof daily during his life in Washington. Mr. Gurdon S. Hubbard, in a brief but interesting memorial, relates one or two interviews held with the President, in which the simplicity of his character and his fidelity to old friendships appear very conspicuously. Mr. Hubbard's acquaintance with Lincoln was of long standing. “I called on him in Washington the year of his inauguration,” says Mr. Hubbard, “and was alone with him for an hour or more. I found him greatly changed, his countenance bearing an expression of great mental anxiety. The whole topic of our conversation was the war, which affected him deeply. . . . Two years after, I again visited Washington, and went to the White House to pay my respects, in company with my friend Thomas L. Forrest. It was Saturday; and, as usual, about six o'clock the band from the navy-yard appeared and began to play. The President, with Adjutant-General Thomas, was seated on the balcony. The crowd was great, marching compactly past the President, the men raising their hats in salutation. As my friend and myself passed he said to me, ‘The President seems to notice you — turn toward him.’ ‘No,’ I said, ‘I don't care to be recognized.’ At that instant Mr. Lincoln started from his seat, advancing quickly to the

iron railing, and leaning over, beckoning with his long arm, called: 'Hubbard! Hubbard! come here!' I left the ranks and ascended the stone steps to the gate of the balcony, which was locked, General Thomas saying, 'Wait a moment, I will get the key.' 'Never mind, General,' said Mr. Lincoln, 'Hubbard is used to jumping — he can scale that fence.' I climbed over, and for about an hour we conversed and watched the large crowd, the rebel flag being in sight on Arlington Heights. This was the last time I ever saw his face in life."

It was noted by those about Lincoln during his residence at the White House that he usually avoided speaking of himself as President or making any reference to the office which he held. He used some such roundabout phrase as "since I came into this place," instead of saying "since I became President." The war he usually spoke of as "this great trouble," and he almost never alluded to the enemy as "Confederates" or "the Confederate Government." He had an unconquerable reluctance to appear to lead public opinion, and often spoke of himself as the "attorney for the people." Once, however, when a Senator was urging on him a certain course which the President was not disposed to pursue, the Senator said, "You say you are the people's attorney. Now, you will admit that this course would be most popular." "But I am not going to let my client manage the case against my judgment," Lincoln replied quickly. "As long as I am attorney for the people I shall manage the case to the best of my ability. They will have a chance to put me out by and by if my management is not satisfactory."

The President was so tormented by visitors seeking interviews for every sort of frivolous and impertinent matter, that he resorted sometimes, in desperation, to

curious and effective inventions to rid himself of the intolerable nuisance. At one time, when he was importuned by some influential people to interfere to prevent the punishment of certain persons convicted of fraudulent dealings with the government — a class of cases too common at that time — the President wrote Secretary Welles that he desired to see the records of the case before it was disposed of. Upon Mr. Welles calling upon him with the desired information, the President said, as if by way of apology, "There was no way to get rid of the crowd that was upon me but by sending you a note." On another occasion, when he had been quite ill, and therefore less inclined than usual to listen to these bores, one of them had just seated himself for a long visit, when the President's physician happened to enter the room, and Lincoln said, holding out his hands, "Doctor, what are these blotches?" "That's varioloid, or mild small-pox," said the doctor. "They're all over me. It is contagious, I believe," said Lincoln. "Very contagious, indeed!" replied the doctor. "Well, I can't stop, Mr. Lincoln; I just called to see how you were," said the visitor. "Oh, don't be in a hurry, sir!" placidly remarked the Executive. "Thank you, sir; I'll call again," replied the visitor, executing a masterly retreat from the White House. "Some people," said the President, looking after him, "said they could not take very well to my proclamation; but now, I am happy to say, I have *something that everybody can take.*"

Among the innumerable nuisances and "cranks" who called on Lincoln at the White House, were the many who sought to win his favor by claiming to have been the first to suggest his nomination as President. One of these claimants, who was the editor of a weekly paper published in a little village in Missouri, called one day, and was admitted to Lincoln's presence. He

at once began explaining that he was the man who first suggested Lincoln's name for the Presidency, and pulling from his pocket an old, worn, defaced copy of his paper, exhibited to the President an item on the subject. "Do you really think," said Lincoln, "that announcement was the occasion of my nomination?" "Certainly," said the editor, "the suggestion was so opportune that it was at once taken up by other papers, and the result was your nomination and election." "Ah, well," said Lincoln, with a sigh, and assuming a rather gloomy countenance, "I am glad to see you and to know this; but you will have to excuse me, I am just going to the War Department to see Mr. Stanton." "Well," said the editor, "I will walk over with you." The President, with that apt good nature so characteristic of him, took up his hat and said, "Come along." When they reached the door of the Secretary's office, Mr. Lincoln turned to his companion and said, "I shall have to see Mr. Stanton alone, and you must excuse me," and taking him by the hand he continued, "Good-bye. I hope you will feel perfectly easy about having nominated me; don't be troubled about it; *I forgive you.*"

A gentleman who, after the dreadful disaster at Fredericksburg, called at the White House with news direct from the front, says that Lincoln appeared so overwhelmed with grief that he was led to remark, "I heartily wish I might be a welcome messenger of good news instead, — that I could tell you how to conquer or get rid of these rebellious States." Looking up quickly, with a marked change of expression, Lincoln said: "That reminds me of two boys in Illinois who took a short cut across an orchard, and did not become aware of the presence of a vicious dog until it was too late to reach either fence. One was spry enough to escape the attack by climbing a tree; but

the other started around the tree, with the dog in hot pursuit, until by making smaller circles than it was possible for his pursuer to make, he gained sufficiently to grasp the dog's tail, and held with desperate grip until nearly exhausted, when he hailed his companion and called to him to come down. 'What for?' said the boy. 'I want you to help me let this dog go.' If I could only let them go!" said the President, in conclusion; "but that is the trouble. I am compelled to hold on to them and make them stay."

In speaking of Lincoln's fortitude under his trials and sufferings, Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote: "Although we believe he has never made any religious profession, we see evidence that in passing through this dreadful national crisis he has been forced by the very anguish of the struggle to look upward, where any rational creature must look for support. No man has suffered more and deeper, albeit with a dry, weary, patient pain, that seemed to some like insensibility. 'Whichever way it ends,' he said to the writer, 'I have the impression that I sha'n't last long after it's over.' After the dreadful repulse of Fredericksburg, his heavy eyes and worn and weary air told how our reverses wore upon him; and yet there was a never-failing fund of patience at bottom that sometimes rose to the surface in some droll, quaint saying or story, that forced a laugh even from himself."

The care and sorrow which Lincoln was called upon to endure in the responsibilities of his high position graven their melancholy marks on each feature of his face. He was a changed man. A pathetic picture of his appearance at this time is given by his old friend, Noah Brooks, whose description of him as he appeared in 1856, on the stump in Ogle County, has already been given a place in these pages. "I did not see Lincoln again," says Mr. Brooks, "until 1862, when I went to



Washington as a newspaper correspondent from California. When Lincoln was on the stump in 1856, his face, though naturally sallow, had a rosy flush. His eyes were full and bright, and he was in the fulness of health and vigor. I shall never forget the shock which the sight of him gave me six years later in 1862. I took it for granted that he had forgotten the young man whom he had met five or six times during the Frémont and Dayton Campaign. He was now President, and was, like Brutus, 'vexed with many cares.' The change which a few years had made was simply appalling. His whiskers had grown and had given additional cadaverousness to his face as it appeared to me. The light seemed to have gone out of his eyes, which were sunken far under his enormous brows. But there was over his whole face an expression of sadness, and a far-away look in the eyes, which were utterly unlike the Lincoln of other days. I was intensely disappointed. I confess that I was so pained that I could almost have shed tears."

## CHAPTER XXIII

Lincoln's Home-life in the White House — Comfort in the Companionship of his Youngest Son — "Little Tad" the Bright Spot in the White House — The President and his Little Boy Reviewing the Army of the Potomac — Various Phases of Lincoln's Character — His Literary Tastes — Fondness for Poetry and Music — His Remarkable Memory — Not a Latin Scholar — Never Read a Novel — Solace in Theatrical Representation — Anecdotes of Booth and McCullough — Methods of Literary Work — Lincoln as an Orator — Caution in Impromptu Speeches — His Literary Style — Management of his Private Correspondence — Knowledge of Woodcraft — Trees and Human Character — Exchanging Views with Professor Agassiz — Magnanimity toward Opponents — Righteous Indignation — Lincoln's Religious Nature.

OF the two sons left to Lincoln after the death of Willie in 1862, Robert, the older, was a student in Harvard College until appointed to service on the staff of General Grant; and "Little Tad," or Thomas, the youngest, was the only one remaining in the White House during the last hard years. He was ten years old in 1863, a bright and lovable child, with whom his father was associated in constant and affectionate companionship. The boy was much with him in his walks and journeys about Washington, and even in his visits to the army in the field. The father would often gain a brief respite from his heavy cares by sharing in the sports and frolics of the light-hearted boy, who was a general favorite at the White House, where he was free to go and come at will. No matter who was with the President, or how intently he might be absorbed, little Tad was always welcome. "It was an impressive and affecting sight," says Mr. Carpenter, an inmate of the White House for several months, "to see the burdened President lost for the time being in

the affectionate parent, as he would take the little fellow in his arms upon the withdrawal of visitors, and caress him with all the fondness of a mother for the babe upon her bosom." Hon. W. D. Kelley, a member of Congress at that time, says: "I think no father ever loved his children more fondly than he. The President never seemed grander in my sight than when, stealing upon him in the evening, I would find him with a book open before him, with little Tad beside him. There were, of course, a great many curious books sent to him, and it seemed to be one of the special delights of his life to open those books at a time when his boy could stand beside him, and they could talk as he turned over the pages, the father thus giving to the son a portion of that care and attention of which he was ordinarily deprived by the heavy duties pressing upon him." Tad lived to be eighteen years old, dying in Chicago in 1871. It was well said of him that he "gave to the sad and solemn White House the only comic relief it knew."

When President Lincoln visited General Hooker's headquarters with the Army of the Potomac, just before the battle of Chancellorsville, little Tad went with him, and rode with his father and General Hooker through the grand reviews that were held. "Over hill and dale," says a member of the Presidential party, "dashed the brilliant cavalcade of the General-in-Chief, surrounded by a company of officers in gay attire and sparkling with gold lace, the party being escorted by the Philadelphia Lancers, a showy troop of soldiers. In the midst, or at the head, rose and fell, as the horses galloped afar, the form of Lincoln, conspicuous by his height and his tall black hat. And ever on the flanks of the hurrying column flew, like a flag or banneret, Tad's little gray riding-cloak. The soldiers soon learned of Tad's presence in the army, and wher-

ever he went on horseback he easily divided the honors with his father. The men cheered and shouted and waved their hats when they saw the dear face and tall figure of the good President, then the best-beloved man in the world; but to these men of war, far away from home and children, the sight of that fresh-faced and laughing boy seemed an inspiration. They cheered like mad."

There were various phases of Lincoln's character, as manifested during his life in the White House, that afford material for an interesting study. It has been said of him that he lacked imagination. This was certainly not one of the faculties of his mind which had been largely cultivated. He relied more upon the exercise of reason and logic, in all his intellectual processes, than upon fancy or imagination. Still, there are often striking figures of speech to be met with in his writings, and he had a great fondness for poetry and music. He had studied Shakespeare diligently in his youth, and portions of the plays he repeated with singular accuracy. He had a special liking for the minor poems of Thomas Hood and of Oliver Wendell Holmes. Dr. Holmes, writing in July, 1885, says that of all the tributes received by him, the one of which he was most proud was from "good Abraham Lincoln," who had a great liking for the poem of "The Last Leaf," and "repeated it from memory to Governor Andrew, as the Governor himself told me." Mr. Arnold says: "He had a great love for poetry and eloquence, and his taste and judgment were excellent. Next to Shakespeare among the poets, his favorite was Burns. There was a lecture of his upon Burns full of favorite quotations and sound criticisms." His musical tastes, says Mr. Brooks, who knew him well, "were simple and uncultivated, his choice being old airs, songs, and ballads, among which the plaintive Scotch songs were best

liked. 'Annie Laurie,' 'Mary of Argyle,' and especially 'Auld Robin Gray,' never lost their charm for him; and all songs which had for their theme the rapid flight of time, decay, the recollections of early days, were sure to make a deep impression. The song which he liked best, above all others, was one called 'Twenty Years Ago'—a simple air, the words to which are supposed to be uttered by a man who revisits the playground of his youth. I remember that one night at the White House, when a few ladies were with the family, singing at the piano-forte, he asked for a little song in which the writer describes his sensations when revisiting the scenes of his boyhood, dwelling mournfully on the vanished joys and the delightful associations of forty years ago. It is not likely that there was much in Lincoln's lost youth that he would wish to recall; but there was a certain melancholy and half-morbid strain in that song which struck a responsive chord in his heart. The lines sank into his memory, and I remember that he quoted them, as if to himself, long afterward."

Lincoln's memory was extraordinarily retentive, and he seemed, without conscious effort, to have stored in his mind almost every whimsical or ludicrous narrative which he had read or heard. "On several occasions," says Mr. Brooks, "I have held in my hand a printed slip while he was repeating its contents to somebody else, and the precision with which he delivered every word was marvellous." He was fond of the writings of "Orpheus C. Kerr" and "Petroleum V. Nasby," who were famous humorists at the time of the Civil War; and he amused himself and others in the darkest hours by quoting passages from these now forgotten authors. Nasby's letter from "Wingert's Corners, Ohio," on the threatening prospects of a migration of the negroes from the South, and the President's "evi-

dent intension of colonizin' on 'em in the North," he especially relished. After rehearsing a portion of this letter to his guests at the Soldiers' Home one evening, a sedate New England gentleman expressed surprise that he could find time for memorizing such things. "Oh," said Lincoln, "I don't. If I like a thing, it *just sticks* after once reading it or hearing it." He once recited a long and doleful ballad, something like "Vilikins and his Dinah," the production of a rural Kentucky bard, and when he had finished he added with a laugh, "I don't believe I have thought of that before for forty years." Mr. Arnold testifies that "although his reading was not extensive, yet his memory was so retentive and so ready that in history, poetry, and in general literature, few if any marked any deficiency. As an illustration of the powers of his memory, may be related the following: A gentleman called at the White House one day, and introduced to him two officers serving in the army, one a Swede and the other a Norwegian. Immediately he repeated, to their delight, a poem of some eight or ten verses descriptive of Scandinavian scenery, and an old Norse legend. He said he had read the poem in a newspaper some years before, and liked it, but it had passed out of his memory until their visit had recalled it. The two books which he read most were the Bible and Shakespeare. With these he was perfectly familiar. From the Bible, as has before been stated, he quoted frequently, and he read it daily, while Shakespeare was his constant companion. He took a copy with him almost always when travelling, and read it at leisure moments."

Lincoln was never ashamed to confess the deficiencies in his early education. A distinguished party, comprising George Thompson, the English anti-slavery orator, Rev. John Pierpont, Oliver Johnson, and Hon. Lewis Clephane, once called upon him, and during

the conversation Mr. Pierpont turned to Mr. Thompson and repeated a Latin quotation from the classics. Mr. Lincoln, leaning forward in his chair, looked from one to the other inquiringly, and then remarked, with a smile, "*Which*, I suppose you are both aware, I do not understand."

While Edwin Forrest was playing an engagement at Ford's Theatre, Mr. Carpenter spoke to the President one day of the actor's fine interpretation of the character of Richelieu, and advised him to witness the performance. "Who wrote the play?" asked the President of Mr. Carpenter. "Bulwer," was the reply. "Ah!" he rejoined; "well, I knew Bulwer wrote novels, but I did not know he was a play-writer also. It may seem somewhat strange to say," he continued, "but *I never read an entire novel in my life*. I once commenced '*Ivanhoe*,' but never finished it."

Among the few diversions which Lincoln allowed himself in Washington was an occasional visit to the theater to witness a representation of some good play by a favorite actor. He felt the necessity of some relaxation from the terrible strain of anxiety and care; and while seated behind the screen in a box at the theatre he was secure from the everlasting importunities of politicians and office-seekers. He could forget himself and his problems while watching the scenes on the mimic stage before him. He enjoyed the renditions of Booth with great zest; yet after witnessing "*The Merchant of Venice*" he remarked on the way home: "It was a good performance, but I had a thousand times rather read it at home, if it were not for Booth's playing. A farce or a comedy is best *played*; a tragedy is best *read* at home." He was much pleased one night with Mr. McCullough's delineation of the character of "Edgar," which the actor played in support of Edwin Forrest's

"Lear." He wished to convey his approval to the young actor, and asked Mr. Brooks, his companion at the moment, with characteristic simplicity, "Do you suppose he would come to the box if we sent word?" Mr. McCullough was summoned, and, standing at the door of the box in his stage attire, received the thanks of the President, accompanied with words of discriminating praise for the excellence of his delineation.

With his keen sense of humor, Lincoln appreciated to the utmost the inimitable presentation of "Falstaff" by a well-known actor of the time. His desire to accord praise wherever it was merited led him to express his admiration in a note to the actor. An interchange of slight civilities followed, ending at last in a singular situation. Entering the President's office late one evening, Mr. Brooks noticed the actor sitting in the waiting-room. Lincoln inquired anxiously if there were anyone outside. On being told, he said, half sadly, almost desperately, "Oh, I can't see him; I can't see him! I was in hopes he had gone away." Then he added, "Now, this illustrates the difficulty of having pleasant friends in this place. You know I liked him as an actor, and that I wrote to tell him so. He sent me a book, and there I thought the matter would end. He is a master of his place in the profession, I suppose, and well fixed in it. But just because we had a little friendly correspondence, such as any two men might have, he wants something. What do you suppose he wants?" I could not guess, and Lincoln added, "Well, he wants to be consul at London. Oh, dear!"

Lincoln was not a ready writer, and when preparing documents or speeches of special importance he altered and elaborated his sentences with patient care. His public utterances were so widely reported and so mercilessly discussed that he acquired caution in expressing himself without due preparation. It is stated, on what



seems sufficient authority, that his Gettysburg speech, brief and simple as it is, was rewritten many times before it finally met his approval. He began also to be guarded in responding to demands for impromptu speeches, which were constantly being called for. Mr. Brooks relates that "once, being notified that he was to be serenaded, just after some notable military or political event, he asked me to come to dinner, 'so as to be on hand and see the fun afterward,' as he said. He excused himself as soon as we had dined, and while the bands were playing, the crowds cheering and the rockets bursting outside the house, he made his re-appearance in the parlor with a roll of manuscript in his hand. Perhaps noticing a look of surprise on my face, he said, 'I know what you are thinking about. You think it mighty queer that an old stump-speaker like myself should not be able to address a crowd like this outside without a written speech. But you must remember that in a certain way I am talking to the country, and I have to be mighty careful. Now, the last time I made an off-hand speech, in answer to a serenade, I used the phrase, as applied to the rebels, "turned tail and ran." Some very nice Boston folks, I am grieved to hear, were very much outraged by that phrase, which they thought improper. So I resolved to make no more impromptu speeches if I could help it.'"

In all Lincoln's writings, even his most important state papers, his chief desire was to make himself clearly understood by the common reader. He had a great aversion to what he called "machine writing," and used the fewest words possible to express his meaning. He never hesitated to employ a homely expression when it suited his purpose. In his first message the phrase "sugar-coated" occurred; and when it was printed, Mr. Defrees, the Public Printer, being on familiar terms with the President, ventured an ob-

jection to the phrase — suggesting that Lincoln was not now preparing a campaign document or delivering a stump speech in Illinois, but constructing an important state paper that would go down historically to all coming time; and that therefore he did not consider the phrase “sugar-coated” as entirely a becoming and dignified one. “Well, Defrees,” replied Lincoln, good-naturedly, “if you think the time will ever come when the people will not understand what ‘sugar-coated’ means, I’ll alter it; otherwise, I think I’ll let it go.”

On the same subject, Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe says: “Our own politicians were somewhat shocked with his state papers at first. ‘Why not let *us* make them a little more conventional, and file them to a classical pattern?’ ‘No,’ was his reply, ‘I shall write them myself. *The people will understand them.*’ ‘But this or that form of expression is not elegant, not classical.’ ‘*The people will understand it,*’ has been his invariable reply. And whatever may be said of his state papers as compared with the classic standards, it has been a fact that they have always been wonderfully well understood by the people, and that since the time of Washington the state papers of no President have more controlled the popular mind. One reason for this is that they have been informal and undiplomatic. They have more resembled a father’s talk to his children than a state paper. They have had that relish and smack of the soil that appeal to the simple human heart and head, which is a greater power in writing than the most artful devices of rhetoric. Lincoln might well say with the apostle, ‘But though I be rude in speech, yet not in knowledge, but we have been thoroughly *made manifest among you* in all things.’ His rejection of what is called ‘fine writing’ was as deliberate as St. Paul’s, and for the same reason —

because he felt that he was speaking on a subject which must be made clear to the lowest intellect, though it should fail to captivate the highest. But we say of Lincoln's writing, that for all true manly purposes there are passages in his state papers that could not be better put; they are absolutely perfect. They are brief, condensed, intense, and with a power of insight and expression which make them worthy to be inscribed in letters of gold."

Hon. William J. Bryan, certainly a competent judge of oratory, says of Lincoln as an orator: "Brevity is the soul of wit, and a part of Lincoln's reputation for wit lies in his ability to condense a great deal into a few words. He was epigrammatic. His Gettysburg speech is the world's model in eloquence, elegance, and condensation. He was apt in illustration—no one more so. A simple story or simile drawn from everyday life flashed before his hearers the argument that he wanted to present. He made frequent use of Bible language, and of illustrations drawn from Holy Writ. It is said that when he was preparing his Springfield speech of 1858 he spent hours in trying to find language that would express the central idea—that a republic could not permanently endure part free and part slave. Finally a Bible passage flashed through his mind, and he exclaimed, 'I have found it—a *house divided against itself cannot stand.*' Probably no other Bible passage ever exerted as much influence as this one in the settlement of a great controversy."

Lincoln was a tireless worker, and delegated no duties to others which he could perform himself. His health seemed to bear the strain of his terrible burdens wonderfully well. There are but few references anywhere to his being incapacitated by illness. One such reference occurs in Welles's Diary, dated March

14, 1865: "The President was somewhat indisposed, but not seriously ill. The members [of the Cabinet] met in his bedroom." His correspondence was extensive and burdensome, and as a rule he wrote his most important letters with his own hand, frequently going to the trouble of taking copies, which were filed with careful order in a cabinet, the interior of which was divided into pigeon-holes. These pigeon-holes, as Mr. Brooks tells us, "were lettered in alphabetical order, but a few were devoted to individuals. Horace Greeley had a pigeon-hole by himself; so did each of several generals who wrote often to him. One compartment, labelled 'W. & W.,' excited much curiosity, but I never asked what it meant, and one night, being sent to the cabinet for a letter which the President wanted, he said, 'I see you looking at my "W. & W." Can you guess what that stands for?' Of course it was useless to guess. 'Well,' said he, with a roguish twinkle of the eye, 'that's Weed and Wood — Thurlow and Fernandy.' Then he added, with an indescribable chuckle, 'That's a pair of 'em.' When asked why he did not have a letter-book and copying-press, he said, 'A letter-book might be easily stolen and carried off, but that stock of filed letters would be a *back-load*.'"

A lady who once rode with Lincoln, in the Presidential carriage, to the Soldiers' Home, gives some interesting details concerning his knowledge of woodcraft. "Around the 'Home,'" says this lady, "grows every variety of tree, particularly of the evergreen class. Their branches brushed into the carriage as we passed along, and left with us that pleasant woodsy smell belonging to fresh leaves. One of the ladies, catching a bit of green from one of these intruding branches, said it was cedar, and another thought it spruce. 'Let me discourse on a theme I understand,' said the President. 'I know all about trees, by right of

being a backwoodsman. I'll show you the difference between spruce, pine, and cedar, and this shred of green, which is neither one nor the other, but a kind of illegitimate cypress.' He then proceeded to gather specimens of each, and explain the distinctive formation of foliage belonging to every species. 'Trees,' he said, 'are as deceptive in their likeness to one another as are certain classes of men, amongst whom none but a physiognomist's eye can detect dissimilar moral features until events have developed them. Do you know it would be a good thing if in all the schools proposed and carried out by the improvement of modern thinkers, we could have a *school of events?*' 'A school of events?' repeated the lady addressed. 'Yes,' he continued, 'since it is only by that active development that character and ability can be tested. Understand me, I now mean men, not trees; *they* can be tried, and an analysis of their strength obtained less expensive to life and human interests than man's. What I say now is a mere whim, you know; but when I speak of a school of events, I mean one in which, before entering real life, students might pass through the mimic vicissitudes and situations that are necessary to bring out their powers and mark the calibre to which they are assigned. Thus, one could select from the graduates an invincible soldier, equal to any position, with no such word as fail; a martyr to right, ready to give up life in the cause; a politician too cunning to be outwitted; and so on. These things have all to be tried, and their sometime failure creates confusion as well as disappointment. There is no more dangerous or expensive analysis than that which consists of *trying a man.*'"

Among Lincoln's callers one Sunday evening, was the distinguished scientist Louis Agassiz. The two men were somewhat alike in their simple, shy, and unpretending nature, and at first felt their way with

each other like two bashful schoolboys. Lincoln began conversation by saying to Agassiz, "I never knew how to pronounce your name properly; won't you give me a little lesson at that, please?" Then he asked if the name were of French or Swiss derivation, to which the Professor replied that it was partly of each. That led to a discussion of different languages, the President speaking several words in different languages which had the same root as similar words in our own tongue; then he illustrated that by one or two anecdotes. But he soon returned to his gentle cross-examination of Agassiz, and found out how the Professor studied, how he composed, and how he delivered his lectures; how he found different tastes in his audiences in different portions of the country. When afterwards asked why he put such questions to his learned visitor, he said, "Why, what we got from him is n't printed in the books; the other things are." But Lincoln did not do all the questioning. In his turn, Agassiz asked Lincoln if he had ever engaged in lecturing. Lincoln gave the outline of a lecture, which he had partly written years before, to show the origin of inventions and prove that there is nothing new under the sun. "I think I can show," said he, "at least, in a fanciful way, that all the modern inventions were known centuries ago." Agassiz begged that Lincoln would finish the lecture sometime. Lincoln replied that he had the manuscript somewhere in his papers, "and," said he, "when I get out of this place, I'll finish it up, perhaps."

So great was Lincoln's magnanimity, and so keen his sense of justice, that he never allowed personal considerations to influence his official acts. It is probably true that it was easy for him to forgive an injury; but he was incapable of using his position as President to gratify his private resentments. It was once represented to him that a recent appointee to an important

office had been bitterly opposed to him politically. "I suppose," said he, "the Judge did behave pretty ugly; but that would n't make him any less fit for this place, and I have a Scriptural authority for appointing him. You recollect that while the Lord on Mount Sinai was getting out a commission for Aaron, that same Aaron was at the foot of the mountain making a false god, a golden calf, for the people to worship; yet Aaron got his commission, you know." At another time, when remonstrated with upon the appointment to place of one of his former opponents, he said: "Nobody will deny that he is a first-rate man for the place, and I am bound to see that his opposition to me personally shall not interfere with my giving the people a good officer." And on another similar occasion, when remonstrated with by members of his Cabinet, he said: "Oh, I can't afford to punish every person who has seen fit to oppose my election. We want a competent man in this office, and I know of no one who could perform the duties better than the one proposed."

With all his self-abnegation, Lincoln could be stern when the occasion warranted it. As an illustration the following incident is related: An officer who had been cashiered from the service, forced himself several times into Lincoln's presence, to plead for a reversal of his sentence. Each time he read a long argument attempting to prove that he had received unjust treatment. The President listened to him patiently; but the facts, on their most favorable showing, did not seem to him to sanction his interference. In the last interview, the man became angry, and turning abruptly said: "Well, Mr. President, I see you are determined not to do me justice!" This was too much, even for the long-suffering Lincoln. Manifesting, however, no more feeling than that indicated by a slight compression of the lips, he quietly arose, laid down a package of papers

he held in his hands, and then, suddenly seizing the disgraced officer by the coat collar, he marched him forcibly to the door, saying, as he ejected him into the passage, "Sir, I give you fair warning never to show yourself in this room again. I can bear censure, but not insult!" In a whining tone the man begged for his papers, which he had dropped. "Begone, sir," said the President, "your papers will be sent to you. I wish never to see your face again!"

Much has been said about Lincoln's views on religion. Like many other great men, he was not what might technically be called a Christian. He was a religious man in spirit and by nature; yet he never joined a church. Mrs. Lincoln says that he had no religious faith, in the usual acceptance of the word, but that religion was a sort of poetry in his nature. "Twice during his life," she said, "he seemed especially to think about it. Once was when our boy Willie died. Once — and this time he thought of it more deeply — was when he went to Gettysburg." But whatever his inner thoughts may have been, no man on earth had a firmer faith in Providence than Abraham Lincoln. Perhaps he did not himself know just where he stood. He believed in God — in immortality. He did not believe in eternal punishment, but was confident of rest and peace after this life was over. He may not have felt certain of the divine origin of all parts of the Bible, but he valued its precepts, and his whole life gave evidence of faith in a higher power than that of man. Mr. Nicolay, his secretary, testifies that "his nature was deeply religious, but he belonged to no denomination; he had faith in the eternal justice and boundless mercy of Providence, and made the Golden Rule of Christ his practical creed." And Dr. Phillips Brooks, in an eloquent and expressive passage, calls him "Shepherd of the people — that old name that the best rulers



ever craved. What ruler ever won it like this President of ours? He fed us faithfully and truly. He fed us with counsel when we were in doubt, with inspiration when we sometimes faltered, with caution when we would be rash, with calm, clear, trustful cheerfulness through many an hour when our hearts were dark. He fed hungry souls all over the country with sympathy and consolation. He spread before the whole land feasts of great duty and devotion and patriotism on which the land grew strong. He fed us with solemn, solid truths. He taught us the sacredness of government, the wickedness of treason. He made our souls glad and vigorous with the love of Liberty that was in his. He showed us how to love truth, and yet be charitable; how to hate wrong and all oppression, and yet not treasure one personal injury or insult. He fed all his people, from the highest to the lowest, from the most privileged down to the most enslaved. 'He fed them with a faithful and true heart.' "

## CHAPTER XXIV

Trials of the Administration in 1863 — Hostility to War Measures — Lack of Confidence at the North — Opposition in Congress — How Lincoln felt about the "Fire in the Rear" — Criticisms from Various Quarters — Visit of "the Boston Set" — The Government on a Tight-rope — The Enlistment of Colored Troops — Interview between Lincoln and Frederick Douglass — Reverses in the Field — Changes of Military Leaders — From Burnside to Hooker — Lincoln's First Meeting with "Fighting Joe" — The President's Solicitude — His Warning Letter to Hooker — His Visit to the Rappahannock — Hooker's Self-confidence the "Worst Thing about Him" — The Defeat at Chancellorsville — The Failure of our Generals — "Wanted, a Man."

IT is impossible, without a close study of the inner history of the war and of the acts of the administration, to conceive of the harassing and baffling difficulties which beset President Lincoln's course in every direction, and of the jealous, narrow, and bitter opposition which his more important measures provoked. As the struggle advanced he found in his front a solid and defiant South, behind him a divided and distrustful North. What might be called the party of action and of extreme measures developed a sharp hostility to the President. He would not go fast enough to suit them; they thought him disposed to compromise. They began by criticizing his policy, and his methods of prosecuting the war; from this they passed rapidly to a criticism of the President himself. In the affectionate admiration felt for him now, people have forgotten how weak and poor and craven they found him then. So far had this disapproval and hostility gone, that early in 1863 we find Mr. Greeley searching everywhere for a fitting successor to Lincoln for the Presidency at the

next term. There were but few men in high official station in Washington who at that time unqualifiedly sustained him. In the House of Representatives there were but two members who could make themselves heard, who stood actively by him. This matter, long since forgotten, must be recalled to show clearly the President's straits, and his action and bearing amidst his difficulties. It should be remembered that party lines, which disappeared at the beginning of the war, were again clearly drawn; and the Democratic wing of Congress, under the leadership of Vallandigham of Ohio, actively opposed many of the necessary measures for the prosecution of the war. The cry had already been raised in Congress, "The South cannot be subjugated"; and every fresh disaster to the national arms was hailed as proof of the assertion.

The effect of this abuse and opposition was exceedingly painful to Lincoln. He said: "I have been caused more anxiety, I have *passed more sleepless nights*, on account of the temper and attitude of the Democratic party in the North regarding the suppression of the rebellion than by the rebels in the South. I have always had faith that our armies would ultimately and completely triumph; but these enemies in the North cause me a great deal of anxiety and apprehension. Can it be that there are opposing opinions in the North as to the necessity of putting down this rebellion? How can men hesitate a moment as to the duty of the Government to restore its authority in every part of the country? It is incomprehensible to me that men living in their quiet homes under the protection of laws, in possession of their property, can sympathize with and give aid and comfort to those who are doing their utmost to overthrow that Government which makes life and everything they possess valuable."

In January, 1863, a party of distinguished gentlemen from Boston visited the national capital, in order to confer with the President on the workings of the emancipation policy. They made the visit chiefly at the suggestion of Ralph Waldo Emerson, who during all the trying years of the war never lost faith in Lincoln's honesty and sense of justice. Secretary Stanton made no secret of his opposition to these gentlemen, who were spoken of rather slightly as "that Boston set." The "Boston set" were uncompromising abolitionists, and nothing would satisfy them but immediate and aggressive measures for enforcing the policy of emancipation. As it was the President's instinct to feel his way slowly in pushing on the great measures necessary to the safe guidance of the nation in its perilous crisis, they were naturally dissatisfied with his conservative methods and tendencies. The visitors—including Senator Wilson, Wendell Phillips, Francis W. Bird, Elizur Wright, J. H. Stephenson, George L. Stearns, Oakes Ames, and Moncure D. Conway—called on the President one Sunday evening, at the White House. "The President met us," says Mr. Conway, "laughing like a boy, saying that in the morning one of his children had come to inform him that the cat had kittens, and now another had just announced that the dog had puppies, and the White House was in a decidedly sensational state. Some of our party looked a little glum at this hilarity; but it was pathetic to see the change in the President's face when he presently resumed his burden of care. We were introduced by Senator Wilson, who began to speak of us severally, when Mr. Lincoln said he knew perfectly who we were, and requested us to be seated. Nothing could be more gracious than his manner, or more simple. The conversation was introduced by Wendell Phillips, who, with all his courtesy, expressed our gratitude and joy

at the Proclamation of Emancipation, and asked how it seemed to be working. The President said that he had not expected much from it at first, and consequently had not been disappointed; he had hoped, and still hoped, that something would come of it after awhile. Phillips then alluded to the deadly hostility which the proclamation had naturally excited in pro-slavery quarters, and gently hinted that the Northern people, now generally anti-slavery, were not satisfied that it was being honestly carried out by all of the nation's agents and Generals in the South. 'My own impression, Mr. Phillips,' said the President, 'is that the masses of the country generally are dissatisfied chiefly at our lack of military successes. Defeat and failure in the field make everything seem wrong.' His face was now clouded, and his next words were somewhat bitter. 'Most of us here present,' he said, 'have been nearly all our lives working in minorities, and many have got into a habit of being dissatisfied.' Several of those present having deprecated this, the President said, 'At any rate, it has been very rare that an opportunity of "running" this administration has been lost.' To this Mr. Phillips answered, in his sweetest voice: 'If we see this administration earnestly working to free the country from slavery and its rebellion, we will show you how we can "run" it into another four years of power.' The President's good humor was restored by this, and he said: 'Oh, Mr. Phillips, I have ceased to have any personal feeling or expectation in that matter — I do not say I never had any — so abused and borne upon as I have been.' . . . On taking our leave we expressed to the President our thanks for his kindly reception, and for his attention to statements of which some were naturally not welcome. The President bowed graciously at this, and, after saying he was happy to have met gentlemen

known to him by distinguished services, if not personally, and glad to listen to their views, added, 'I must bear this load which the country has intrusted to me as well as I can, and do the best I can with it.' "

To another self-constituted delegation — this time from the West — who called at the White House one day, excited and troubled about some of the commissions or omissions of the administration, the President, after hearing them patiently, replied: "Gentlemen, suppose all the property you were worth was in gold, and you had put it in the hands of Blondin to carry across the Niagara river on a rope; would you shake the cable, or keep shouting out to him, 'Blondin, stand up a little straighter! — Blondin, stoop a little more — go a little faster — lean a little more to the north — lean a little more to the south'? No! you would hold your breath as well as your tongue, and keep your hands off until he was safe over. The Government is carrying an immense weight. Untold treasures are in their hands. They are doing the very best they can. Don't badger them. Keep silence, and we'll get you safe across."

In 1863 the Government, following logically the policy of the Emancipation act, began the experiment of introducing colored soldiers into our armies. This caused not only intense anger at the South, but much doubt and dissatisfaction at the North. To discuss some of the practical and difficult questions growing out of this measure, Frederick Douglass, the most distinguished representative of the race which America had so long held in chains, was presented to the President. The account of the conference, given by Douglass, is singularly interesting. He says: "I was never more quickly or more completely put at ease in the presence of a great man than in that of Abraham Lincoln. He was seated, when I entered, in a low

arm-chair, with his feet extended on the floor, surrounded by a large number of documents and several busy secretaries. The room bore the marks of business, and the persons in it, the President included, appeared to be much overworked and tired. Long lines of care were already deeply written on Mr. Lincoln's brow, and his strong face, full of earnestness, lighted up as soon as my name was mentioned. As I approached and was introduced to him, he arose and extended his hand, and bade me welcome. I at once felt myself in the presence of an honest man — one whom I could love, honor, and trust, without reserve or doubt. Proceeding to tell him who I was and what I was doing, he promptly but kindly stopped me, saying: 'I know who you are, Mr. Douglass; Mr. Seward has told me all about you. Sit down; I am glad to see you.' I urged, among other things, the necessity of granting the colored soldiers equal pay and promotion with white soldiers, and retaliation for colored prisoners killed by the enemy. Mr. Lincoln admitted the justice of my demand for equal pay and promotion of colored soldiers, but on the matter of retaliation he differed from me entirely. I shall never forget the benignant expression of his face, the tearful look of his eye, and the quiver in his voice, when he deprecated a resort to retaliatory measures. 'Once begun,' said he, 'I do not know where such a measure would stop.' He said he could not take men out and kill them in cold blood for what was done by others. If he could get hold of the persons who were guilty of killing the colored prisoners in cold blood, the case would be different; but he could not kill the innocent for the guilty. Afterwards we discussed the means most desirable to be employed outside the army to induce the slaves in the rebel States to come within the Federal lines. The increasing opposition to the war in the North, and the

mad cry against it because it was being made an abolition war, alarmed Mr. Lincoln, and made him apprehensive that a peace might be forced upon him which would leave still in slavery all who had not come within our lines. What he wanted was to make his proclamation as effective as possible in the event of such a peace. He said, in a regretful tone, 'The slaves are not coming into our lines as rapidly and numerously as I had hoped.' I replied that the slaveholders knew how to keep such things from their slaves, and probably very few knew of his proclamation. 'Well,' he said, 'I want you to set about devising some means of making them acquainted with it, and for bringing them into our lines.' What he said showed a deeper moral conviction against slavery than I had ever seen before in anything spoken or written by him. I listened with the deepest interest and profoundest satisfaction, and, at his suggestion, agreed to undertake the organizing of a band of scouts, composed of colored men, whose business should be, somewhat after the original plan of John Brown, to go into the rebel States beyond the lines of our armies, carry the news of emancipation, and urge the slaves to come within our boundaries."

Frederick Douglass once remarked that Lincoln was one of the few white men he ever passed an hour with who failed to remind him in some way, before the interview terminated, that he was a negro. "He always impressed me as a strong, earnest man, having no time or disposition to trifle; grappling with all his might the work he had in hand. The expression of his face was a blending of suffering with patience and fortitude. Men called him homely, and homely he was; but it was manifestly a human homeliness. His eyes had in them the tenderness of motherhood, and his mouth and other features the highest perfection of a genuine manhood."

As though the political difficulties that beset Presi-



dent Lincoln in the first half of 1863 were not discouragement enough, they were attended by disheartening reverses to our arms. It will be remembered that on the removal of General McClellan from command of the Army of the Potomac, in November, 1862, General Burnside succeeded him. The change proved an unfortunate one. General Burnside was an earnest and gallant soldier, but was not equal to the vast responsibilities of his new position. It is said, to his credit, that he was three times offered the command of the Army of the Potomac, and three times he declined. Finally it was pressed upon him by positive orders, and he could no longer, without insubordination, refuse it. In addressing General Halleck, after his appointment, he said: "Had I been asked to take it, I should have declined; but being ordered, I cheerfully obey." After his fearful defeat at Fredericksburg (December 13, 1862), he said: "*The fault was mine.* The entire responsibility of failure must rest on my shoulders." By his manly and courageous bearing, and the strong sincerity of his character, he retained the respect and sympathy of the President and of the country. He immediately retired from command of the Army of the Potomac, which, under his brief leadership, had fought the most bloody and disastrous battle in its history.

General Joseph Hooker, the fourth commander of the heroic but unfortunate Army of the Potomac, was appointed to that position by President Lincoln in January, 1863. The two men had met briefly early in the war, when Hooker, then living in California, hastened to Washington to offer his services to the Government; but for some reason General Scott disliked him, and his offer was not accepted. After some months, Hooker, giving up the idea of getting a command, decided to return to California; but before leaving he called to pay his respects to the President.

He was introduced as "Captain Hooker." The President, being pressed for time, was about to dismiss him with a few civil phrases; when, to his surprise, Hooker began the following speech: "Mr. President, my friend makes a mistake. I am not 'Captain Hooker,' but was once 'Lieutenant-Colonel Hooker' of the regular army. I was lately a farmer in California. Since the rebellion broke out I have been trying to get into the service; but I find I am not wanted. I am about to return home; but before going, I was anxious to pay my respects to you, and to express my wishes for your personal welfare and success in quelling this rebellion. And I want to say one word more. I was at Bull Run the other day, Mr. President, and it is no vanity in me to say *I am a d——d sight better general than you had on that field.*" This was said, not in the tone of a braggart, but of a man who knew what he was talking about; and, as the President afterward said, he appeared at that moment as if perfectly able to make good his words. Lincoln seized his hand, making him sit down, and began an extended chat. The result was that Hooker did not return to California, but in a few weeks *Captain* Hooker was *Brigadier-General* Hooker. He served with distinction under McClellan in the Peninsular campaign and at Antietam, and commanded the right wing of the army at Fredericksburg. He had come to be known as "Fighting Joe Hooker," and was generally regarded as one of the most vigorous and efficient Generals of the Union army.

Such was the man who, in one of the darkest hours of the Union cause, was selected to lead once more the Army of the Potomac against the enemy. This army, since its defeat at Fredericksburg, had remained disorganized and ineffective. Its new commander, unlike his predecessor Burnside, was full of confidence. The President, made cautious by experience, deemed it his

duty to accompany the appointment by some timely words of warning; and accordingly he addressed to General Hooker the following frank, manly, and judicious letter.

EXECUTIVE MANSION WASHINGTON, D. C.

January 26, 1863.

MAJOR-GENERAL HOOKER.

GENERAL:—I have placed you at the head of the Army of the Potomac. Of course, I have done this upon what appear to me to be sufficient reasons; and yet I think it best for you to know that there are some things in regard to which I am not satisfied with you. I believe you to be a brave and skilful soldier, which of course I like. I also believe that you do not mix politics with your profession, in which you are right. You have confidence in yourself, which is a valuable if not indispensable quality. You are ambitious, which, within reasonable bounds, does good rather than harm; but I think that during General Burnside's command of the army you have taken counsel with your ambition, and thwarted him as much as you could, in which you did a great wrong to the country and to a most meritorious and honorable brother officer. I have heard, in such a way as to believe it, of your recently saying that both the army and the Government needed a dictator. Of course, it was not for this, but in spite of it, that I have given you the command. Only those generals who gain success can be dictators. What I now ask from you is military success, and I will risk the dictatorship. The Government will support you to the utmost of its ability, which is neither more nor less than it has done and will do for all commanders. I much fear that the spirit which you have aided to infuse into the army, of criticizing their commander and withholding confidence from him, will now turn upon you. I shall assist you, as far as I can, to pull it down. Neither you nor Napoleon, if he were alive again, could get any good

out of an army while such a spirit prevails in it. And now, beware of rashness. *Beware of rashness*; but with energy and sleepless vigilance, go forward and give us victories. Yours very truly, A. LINCOLN.

In all Lincoln's writings there are few things finer than this letter. In its candor and friendliness, its simplicity and deep wisdom, and its clearness of expression, it is almost perfect; and the President's deep solicitude for the safety of the army and anxiety for its success give a pathetic touch to the closing sentences. This solicitude found partial relief in a personal inspection of the Army of the Potomac, which was made in April, just before the battle of Chancellorsville, and occupied five or six days. The President was accompanied by Attorney-General Bates, Mrs. Lincoln, his son Tad, and Mr. Noah P. Brooks. The first night out was spent on the little steamer which conveyed the party to their destination. After all had retired to rest except the anxious President and one or two others, Lincoln gave utterance to his deep-seated apprehensions in the whispered query to his friend, "How many of our monitors will you wager are at the bottom of Charleston Harbor?" "I essayed," writes Mr. Brooks, "to give a cheerful view of the Charleston situation. But he would not be encouraged. He then went on to say that he did not believe that an attack by water on Charleston could ever possibly succeed. He talked a long time about his 'notions,' as he called them; and at General Halleck's headquarters next day, the first inquiries were for 'rebel papers,' which were usually brought in from the picket lines. These he examined with great anxiety, hoping that he might find an item of news from Charleston. One day, having looked all over a Richmond paper several times without finding a paragraph which he had been told was in

it, he was mightily pleased to have it pointed out to him, and said, 'It is plain that newspapers are made for newspaper men; being only a layman, it was impossible for me to find that.'"

The out-door life, the constant riding, and the respite from the monstrous burdens at the capital, appeared to afford mental and physical benefit to the worn President. But in answer to a remark expressing this conviction, he replied sadly, "I don't know about 'the rest' as you call it. I suppose it is good for the body. But the tired part of me is *inside* and out of reach." "He rode a great deal," says Mr. Brooks, "while with the army, always preferring the saddle to the elegant ambulance which had been provided for him. He sat his horse well, but he rode hard, and during his stay I think he regularly used up at least one horse each day. Little Tad invariably followed in his father's train; and, mounted on a smaller horse, accompanied by an orderly, the youngster was a conspicuous figure, as his gray cloak flew in the wind while we hung on the flanks of Hooker and his generals."

General Hooker was now planning his great movement against Richmond, and talked freely of the matter with the President. In the course of a conversation, Lincoln casually remarked, "If you get to Richmond, General." But Hooker interrupted him with — "Excuse me, Mr. President, but there is no 'if' in the case. *I am going straight to Richmond, if I live!*" Later in the day, Lincoln, privately referring to this self-confidence of the General, said to Mr. Brooks, rather mournfully, "It is about the worst thing I have seen since I have been down here." In further illustration of Hooker's confidence in himself, Mr. Brooks says: "One night, Hooker and I being alone in his hut, the General standing with his back to the fireplace, alert, handsome, full of courage and confidence, said laughingly, 'The

President says you know about that letter he wrote me on taking command.' I acknowledged that the President had read it to me. The General seemed to think that the advice was well-meant, but unnecessary. Then he added, with that charming assurance which became him so well, 'After I have been to Richmond, I am going to have that letter printed.' " But all that came of Hooker's confidence, after three months of elaborate preparation, was a grand forward movement into Virginia and another bloody and humiliating defeat for the heroic but unfortunate army under his command.

The first of May, 1863, the Army of the Potomac under Hooker met the Army of Northern Virginia under Lee and Jackson, near Chancellorsville, Virginia. It was here that Jackson executed his brilliant and successful flank movement around the Union right, ensuring a victory for his side but losing his own life. After a contest of several days, involving the fruitless sacrifice of thousands of gallant soldiers, Hooker's army fell back and recrossed the Rappahannock.<sup>1</sup>

The news of this fresh disaster was an almost stunning shock to President Lincoln. During the progress of the battle he was under a cruel strain of anxiety

<sup>1</sup> The cause of General Hooker's seeming stupefaction at the critical point of the Chancellorsville battle has been much discussed but never satisfactorily explained. It has been thought that he was disabled by the shock of a cannon-ball striking a post or pillar of the house where he had his headquarters. An interesting entry in Welles's Diary, made soon after the battle, reflects somewhat the feeling at the time. "Sumner expresses an absolute want of confidence in Hooker; says he knows him to be a blasphemous wretch; that after crossing the Rappahannock and reaching Centreville, Hooker exultingly exclaimed, 'The enemy are in my power, and God Almighty cannot deprive me of them.' I have heard before of this, but not so direct and positive. The sudden paralysis that followed, when the army in the midst of a successful career was suddenly checked and commenced its retreat, has never been explained. Whiskey is said by Sumner to have done the work. The President said that if Hooker had been killed by the shot which knocked over the pillar that stunned him, we should have been successful."

and suspense. Secretary Welles, who was with him a part of the time, says: "He had a feverish eagerness for facts; was constantly up and down, for nothing reliable came from the front." Mr. Noah Brooks relates that in company with an old friend of Lincoln's he was waiting in one of the family rooms of the White House. "A door opened and Lincoln appeared, holding an open telegram in his hand. The sight of his face and figure was frightful. He seemed stricken with death. Almost tottering to a chair, he sat down; and then I mechanically noticed that his face was of the same color as the wall behind him — not pale, not even sallow, but gray, like ashes. Extending the despatch to me, he said, with a hollow, far-off voice, 'Read it — news from the army.' The telegram was from General Butterfield, I think, then chief of staff to Hooker. It was very brief, simply saying that the Army of the Potomac had 'safely recrossed the Rappahannock,' and was now at its old position on the north bank of that stream. The President's friend, Dr. Henry, an old man and somewhat impressionable, burst into tears, — not so much, probably, at the news as on account of its effect upon Lincoln. The President regarded the old man for an instant with dry eyes, and said, '*What will the country say? Oh, what will the country say?*' He seemed hungry for consolation and cheer, and sat a little while talking about the failure. Yet it did not seem that he was disappointed so much for himself, but that he thought the country would be."

Lincoln's anxiety regarding the effect at the North of these repeated reverses was not without sufficient cause. Aside from those who were positively opposed to the war, the loyal people were wearying of the useless slaughter, the unavailing struggles, of the gallant soldiers. The growing distrust of the capacity of their

military leaders was also keenly felt. The feeling of that time is so well expressed in a stirring poem entitled "Wanted, a Man," written by Mr. E. C. Steadman, that it is given place here. It has an additional personal interest connected with President Lincoln in the fact that he was so impressed with the piece that he read it aloud to his assembled Cabinet.

Back from the trebly crimsoned field  
 Terrible words are thunder-tost;  
 Full of the wrath that will not yield,  
 Full of revenge for battles lost!  
 Hark to their echo, as it crost  
 The Capital, making faces wan:  
 End this murderous holocaust;  
 Abraham Lincoln, give us a MAN!

Give us a man of God's own mould,  
 Born to marshal his fellow-men;  
 One whose fame is not bought and sold  
 At the stroke of a politician's pen;  
 Give us the man of thousands ten,  
 Fit to do as well as to plan;  
 Give us a rallying-cry, and then,  
 Abraham Lincoln, give us a MAN!

No leader to shirk the boasting foe,  
 And to march and countermarch our brave  
 Till they fall like ghosts in the marshes low,  
 And swamp-grass covers each nameless grave;  
 Nor another, whose fatal banners wave  
 Aye in Disaster's shameful van;  
 Nor another, to bluster, and lie, and rave, —  
 Abraham Lincoln, give us a MAN!

Hearts are mourning in the North,  
 While the sister rivers seek the main,  
 Red with our life-blood flowing forth —  
 Who shall gather it up again?



Though we march to the battle-plain  
Firmly as when the strife began,  
Shall all our offerings be in vain? —  
Abraham Lincoln, give us a MAN!

Is there never one in all the land,  
One on whose might the Cause may lean?  
Are all the common ones so grand,  
And all the titled ones so mean?  
What if your failure may have been  
In trying to make good bread from bran,  
From worthless metal a weapon keen? —  
Abraham Lincoln, find us a MAN!

O, we will follow him to the death,  
Where the foeman's fiercest columns are!  
O, we will use our latest breath,  
Cheering for every sacred star!  
His to marshal us high and far;  
Ours to battle, as patriots can  
When a Hero leads the Holy War! —  
Abraham Lincoln, give us a MAN!

## CHAPTER XXV

The Battle-summer of 1863 — A Turn of the Tide — Lee's Invasion of Pennsylvania — A Threatening Crisis — Change of Union Commanders — Meade succeeds Hooker — The Battle of Gettysburg — Lincoln's Anxiety during the Fight — The Retreat of Lee — Union Victories in the Southwest — The Capture of Vicksburg — Lincoln's Thanks to Grant — Returning Cheerfulness — Congratulations to the Country — Improved State of Feeling at the North — State Elections of 1863 — The Administration Sustained — Dedication of the National Cemetery at Gettysburg — Lincoln's Address — Scenes and Incidents at the Dedication — Meeting with Old John Burns — Edward Everett's Impressions of Lincoln.

**M**IDSUMMER of 1863 brought a turn in the tide of military affairs. It came none too soon for the safety of the nation. The repeated reverses to the Union arms ending with the shocking disasters at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville—although slightly relieved by the costly success of Stone River—had seemed to throw the chances of war in favor of the South; and the Union cause was at the crisis of its fate. But now fortune smiled upon the North, and its lost hope and lost ground were regained at Gettysburg and Vicksburg. These great battles are justly regarded as marking the turning-point of the war. It was yet far from finished; there remained nearly two years of desperate fighting, with heroic struggles and terrible sacrifice of life, before the end should come. But from this time the character of the struggle seemed to change. The armies of the South fought, not less desperately, but more on the defensive; and their final overthrow was in all human probability chiefly a question of time.

Emboldened by his success at Chancellorsville in May, General Lee again assumed the offensive, and recrossed the Potomac river into Maryland. Late in June he invaded Pennsylvania, and occupied a position threatening Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington. The situation was most critical. If Lee could once more beat the Army of the Potomac, as he had done so many times, these three great cities, and even New York, might be at his mercy. The feeling in Washington is reflected in entries made at the time in Mr. Welles's Diary. "Something of a panic pervades the city," says Mr. Welles. "Singular rumors reach us of Rebel advances into Maryland. It is said they have reached Hagerstown, and some of them have penetrated as far as Chambersburg in Pennsylvania. . . . The city is full of strange, wild rumors of Rebel raids in the vicinity and of trains seized in sight of the Capital. The War Department is wholly unprepared for an irruption here, and J. E. B. Stuart might have dashed into the city to-day [June 28] with impunity. . . . I have a panic telegraph from Governor Curtin of Pennsylvania, who is excitable and easily alarmed, entreating that guns and gunners may be sent from the Navy Yard at Philadelphia to Harrisburg without delay. . . . I went again, at a late hour, to the War Department, but could get no facts or intelligence from the Secretary. All was vague, opaque, thick darkness. I really think Stanton is no better posted than myself, and from what Stanton says am afraid Hooker does not comprehend Lee's intentions nor know how to counteract them. It looks to me as if Lee was putting forth his whole energy and force in one great and desperate struggle which shall be decisive."

Following Lee, the Army of the Potomac, under General Hooker, also recrossed the Potomac, and pur-

sued the enemy by a somewhat parallel route, but keeping carefully between him and Washington. The occasion was one calling for the best resources of a great military commander; and General Hooker, realizing his unfitness for the responsibility, asked to be relieved of the command. Thus was thrown upon the President the hazardous necessity of changing commanders upon the very eve of a great battle. It was a terrible emergency. Even the stout-hearted Stanton was appalled. He afterward stated that when he received the despatch from Hooker, asking to be relieved, his heart sank within him, and he was more depressed than at any other moment of the war. "I could not say," said Mr. Stanton, "that any other officer knew General Hooker's plans, or the position even of the various divisions of the army. I sent for the President to come at once to the War Office. It was in the evening, but the President soon appeared. I handed him the despatch. As he read it his face became like lead, and I said, 'What shall be done?' He replied instantly, '*Accept his resignation.*'"

Immediately an order was sent to Major-General George G. Meade, one of the most efficient of the corps commanders of the Army of the Potomac, appointing him to the chief command. Meade was a quiet, unassuming man, very unlike Hooker. Three days after assuming command, he led his army against the Southern host at Gettysburg, where, after a most bloody and memorable battle of three days' duration (July 1, 2, and 3, 1863), was won the first decisive victory in the history of the gallant Army of the Potomac. Lee retired, with disastrous losses, across the Potomac to Virginia; and Washington and the North breathed free again.

Senator Chandler of Michigan, speaking of the terrible strain on Lincoln during the progress of the

battle of Gettysburg, said: "I shall never forget the painful anxiety of those few days when the fate of the nation seemed to hang in the balance; nor the restless solicitude of Mr. Lincoln, as he paced up and down the room, reading despatches, soliloquizing, and often stopping to trace the position of the contending armies on the map which hung on the wall; nor the relief we all felt when the fact was established that victory, though gained at such fearful cost, was indeed on the side of the Union."

Amidst the murk and gloom of those dark days in Washington, when the suspense was breathless and the heart of the nation responded in muffled beats to the dull booming of the cannon of Meade and Lee at Gettysburg, an episode occurred, with Lincoln as the central figure, which reveals perhaps more poignantly than any other in his whole career the depths of feeling in that tender and reverential soul. On Sunday evening, July 4,—the fourth day of that terrible battle, with nothing definite yet known of the result,—the President drove out in a carriage, in company with two daughters of Secretary Stanton, to the line of defenses near Arlington. It was toward sundown; and a brigade of troops were forming in position for an evening parade or review. The commander of the brigade, General Tannatt, recognizing the President and his party, rode up to the carriage and invited them to witness the parade. The President assented. His face was drawn and haggard in its expression of anxiety and sorrow. As it was Sunday evening, some of the regimental bands played familiar religious pieces. The President, hearing them, inquired of General Tannatt if any of his bands could play "Lead Kindly Light." Then in a low voice and with touching accents he repeated, as if to himself, the familiar lines — never more expressive or appropriate than now, —

Lead, kindly light, amid the encircling gloom,  
Lead thou me on.

Keep thou my feet; I do not ask to see  
The distant scene, — one step enough for me.

As the sweet strains of the familiar hymn floated on the evening air, Lincoln's sad face became sadder still, and tears were seen coursing down his cheeks. What emotions were his, who can tell, as he thought of that great battle-field not far away, its issues yet unknown, its ground still covered with dead and wounded soldiers whose heroic deeds — to use his noble words spoken a few months later on that historic field — "have consecrated it far above our power to add or detract."

General Tannatt, who knew Lincoln well and had spoken with him many times, never saw him again; and his view of that tragic, tear-wet face remains to him a vivid and precious memory.<sup>1</sup>

While the eyes of the nation were fastened upon the great drama being enacted near the capital, events scarcely less momentous were occurring in the Southwest. The campaign against Vicksburg, the great Confederate stronghold on the Mississippi river, had been in active progress, under the personal command of General Grant, for several months. The importance of this strategic point was fully understood by the enemy, and it was defended most stubbornly. At first Grant's plans proved unsuccessful; the cutting of canals and opening of bayous failed — as President Lincoln had expected and predicted. But these failures only served to develop the unsuspected energy of Grant's character and the extent of his military resources. He boldly changed his entire plan of opera-

<sup>1</sup> General T. R. Tannatt, a graduate of West Point in 1858, is now (1913) an active and honored citizen of Spokane, Washington.

tions, abandoned his line of communication, removed his army to a point *below* Vicksburg and attacked the city in the rear. With dogged persistence he pressed forward, gaining point by point, beating off General Johnston's forces on one side and driving Pemberton before him into Vicksburg; until finally, by the aid of Admiral Porter's gunboats on the Mississippi, he had entirely invested the city. Gradually and persistently his lines closed in, pushed forward by assault and siege; until Vicksburg accepted its doom, and on the 4th of July, 1863, — the day of Lee's retreat from Gettysburg, — the city and garrison surrendered to the victorious Grant.

Lincoln's exuberant joy over the capture of Vicksburg is revealed in an entry made at the time in Mr. Welles's Diary. "I was handed a despatch from Admiral Porter, communicating the fall of Vicksburg on the Fourth of July," says Mr. Welles. "I immediately returned to the Executive Mansion. The President was detailing certain points relative to Grant's movements on the map to Chase and two or three others, when I gave him the tidings. Putting down the map he rose at once, said he would drop these topics, and added, 'I myself will telegraph this news to General Meade.' He seized his hat, but suddenly stopped, his countenance beaming with joy; he caught my hand, and throwing his arm around me, exclaimed, 'What can we do for the Secretary of the Navy for this glorious intelligence? He is always giving us good news. I cannot, in words, tell you my joy over this result. It is great, Mr. Welles, it is great!' . . . We walked the lawn together. 'This,' said he, 'will relieve Banks. It will inspire me.'"

The Union victories at Vicksburg and Gettysburg caused great rejoicing at the North, and gave added zest to the celebration of the national patriotic holiday.

President Lincoln, mindful of the "almost inestimable services," as he termed them, of General Grant, and as it was his wont to do in such circumstances, made haste to acknowledge his own and the country's indebtedness to the man who had accomplished a great deed. He addressed to the conqueror of Vicksburg the following letter:

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, D. C.

July 13, 1863.

MAJOR-GENERAL GRANT.

MY DEAR GENERAL:— I do not remember that you and I ever met personally. I write this now as a grateful acknowledgment for the almost inestimable services you have done the country. I write to say a word further. When you first reached the vicinity of Vicksburg, I thought you should do what you finally did—march the troops across the neck, run the batteries with the transports, and thus go below; and I never had any faith, except a general hope that you knew better than I, that the Yazoo Pass expedition, and the like, could succeed. When you got below, and took Port Gibson, Grand Gulf, and vicinity, I thought you should go down the river, and join General Banks, and when you turned northward, east of the Big Black, I feared it was a mistake. I now wish to make the personal acknowledgment that you were right and I was wrong.

Yours truly, A. LINCOLN.

An officer who was the first from Grant's army to reach Washington after the surrender of Vicksburg, has recorded the circumstances of his interview with the President. "Mr. Lincoln received me very cordially," says this officer, "and drawing a chair near to himself and motioning me to be seated said, 'Now I want to hear all about Vicksburg.' I gave him all the information I could, though he appeared to be remark-



ably well posted himself. He put to me a great many questions in detail touching the siege, the losses, the morale of the army, its sanitary condition, the hospital service, and General Grant. Said he: 'I guess I was right in standing by Grant, although there was great pressure made after Pittsburg Landing to have him removed. I thought I saw enough in Grant to convince me that he was one on whom the country could depend. That 'unconditional surrender' message to Buckner at Donelson suited me. It indicated the spirit of the man.'

It is interesting to note that before the capture of Vicksburg the protracted campaign had occasioned no little dissatisfaction with General Grant; the President had been importuned to remove him, and had much formidable opposition to encounter in his determination to stand by him. Only a few days before the capitulation of the beleaguered city, Senator Wade of Ohio — "Bluff Ben Wade," as he was termed — called upon the President and urged Grant's dismissal; to which Lincoln good-naturedly replied, "Senator, that reminds me of a story." "Yes, yes," rejoined Wade petulantly, "that is the way it is with you, sir, all *story* — *story*! You are the father of every military blunder that has been made during the war. You are on your road to h—l, sir, with this Government, and you are not a mile off this minute." Lincoln calmly retorted, "Senator, that is just about the distance from here to the Capitol, is it not?" The exasperated Wade grabbed his hat and rushed angrily from the White House.

It is not pleasant to record that the cordial and generous congratulations to Grant for his achievements at Vicksburg were in marked contrast to the rather grudging recognition of Meade's much more important and hard-won victory at Gettysburg. In

the latter case the despatches from Washington took the form not so much of acknowledgments of what had been done as of complaints at what had not been done. It is hard to believe that the President dictated, or even authorized, the ill-timed and peevish despatch sent to General Meade<sup>1</sup> by the inopportune Halleck, a few days after the battle of Gettysburg, in which the victor on that desperate field is officially informed that "the escape of Lee's army has created great dissatisfaction in the mind of the President, and it will require an active and energetic pursuit to remove the impression that it has not been sufficiently active before." To this extraordinary message Meade at once made a simple and manly rejoinder in which he said: "Having performed my duty conscientiously and to the best of my ability, the censure of the President, as conveyed in your despatch, is in my judgment so undeserved that I feel compelled most respectfully to ask to be immediately relieved from the command of this army." Halleck replied, rather ineptly, that his despatch had not been intended as a censure, but as a "stimulus," and was not regarded as a sufficient cause for Meade's request to be relieved. When one thinks of the ill-fortunes of the Army of the Potomac

<sup>1</sup> The criticism of Meade for not attacking Lee before he recrossed the Potomac is based on the assumption that the attack must be successful. On this point Meade's words to Halleck, written in reply to the latter's conciliatory letter of July 28, can hardly be ignored. "Had I attacked Lee the day I proposed to do so, and in the ignorance that then existed of his position, I have every reason to believe the attack would have been unsuccessful, and would have resulted disastrously. This opinion is founded on the judgment of a number of distinguished officers after inspecting Lee's vacated works and position. Among these officers I could name Generals Sedgwick, Wright, Slocum, Hays, Sykes, and others." In other words the attack which Meade has been so severely blamed for not making might have ended in reversing the results at Gettysburg, losing all we had gained at such terrible cost, placed Washington and other Northern cities in far more deadly peril, and changing the whole subsequent issues of the war.

under previous commanders, and of the unlikelihood of finding a successor to Meade as capable as he had shown himself to be, one shudders at the chances of what might have happened had another change of leaders been forced upon that long-suffering and now victorious army. General Meade did not press his resignation after Halleck's conciliatory telegrams, and remained in immediate command of the Army of the Potomac until the close of the war — Grant's accession to the chief command of all the armies having marked the end of the well-meant but often ill-advised and troublesome interference with military affairs from Washington.

Mr. Isaac R. Pennypacker, in his *Life of General Meade*, speaks of Halleck and other prominent officials in Washington in these terms: "Possessing much of the skill of the lawyer and disputant, Halleck was without military ability. The Secretary of War, like many other men who exercise vast power, was not great enough to refrain from the use of his authority in matters where his knowledge and experience did not qualify him to form the soundest views. Acting with these military authorities were men like Wade and Chandler, whose patriotism was of the exuberant kind, whose judgment in military affairs was without value, but whose personal energy impelled them to have a controlling hand, if possible, in the conduct of the war."

Lincoln's dissatisfaction with General Meade after the battle of Gettysburg was due, as we now see, to his elation over the splendid victory for the Union, his intense desire for further and overwhelming successes, and his failure (a quite natural one) to realize that what might seem desirable and feasible viewed from Washington might look very different to the practical and experienced men actually on the ground and

familiar as he could not be with all the factors in the situation.<sup>1</sup> "He thought," wrote General Halleck in an explanatory letter sent to Meade two weeks after his despatch of censure, "that Lee's defeat was so certain that he felt no little impatience at his unexpected escape." Among military authorities, such a retreat as that of Lee after Gettysburg is hardly regarded as an "escape." If it were, then great must be the fault of Lee as a general in allowing the defeated armies of Burnside and Hooker to "escape" after the battles of Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville, where their repulse was much worse than was Lee's at Gettysburg. That Lincoln's first feelings of disappointment and dissatisfaction with General Meade were greatly modified with fuller knowledge of the actual situation after the battle of Gettysburg is shown by a remark made by him to Senator Cameron, referring to Meade: "Why should we censure a man who has done so much for his

<sup>1</sup> A curious revelation of the estimate of General Halleck held by at least one member of the Cabinet, and of the relations between Halleck and the President, is found in Welles's Diary in the record of a rather free conversation with the President during the anxious period about the time of the battle of Gettysburg. Says Mr. Welles: "I stated I had observed the inertness if not the incapacity of the General-in-Chief, and had hoped that he [the President], who had better and more correct views, would issue peremptory orders. The President immediately softened his tone, and said, 'Halleck knows better than I what to do. He is a military man, has had a military education. I brought him here to give me military advice. His views and mine are widely different. It is better that I, who am not a military man, should defer to him, rather than he to me.' This," continues Mr. Welles, "is the President's error. His own convictions and conclusions are infinitely superior to Halleck's; even in military operations, more sensible and more correct always. . . . Halleck has no activity; never exhibits sagacity or foresight." And in another place in the same Diary we are given this singular picture by a Cabinet minister of the man who was at that moment the General-in-Chief of the Union armies and the military adviser of the President: "Halleck sits and smokes, and swears, and scratches his arm, but exhibits little military capacity or intelligence; is obfuscated, muddy, uncertain, stupid as to what is doing or to be done."

country because he did not do a little more?" And if any debt of recognition or of gratitude yet remained due from him, it was more than paid a few months later in the unsurpassed tribute at Gettysburg to "the brave men, living and dead," who gained the victory on that hallowed field.

The improved condition of public affairs, and the increasing cheerfulness of the President, after the victories at Gettysburg and Vicksburg, are exhibited in a letter written by him a few weeks later to friends at Springfield, Illinois, who had urgently invited him to attend "a mass-meeting of Unconditional Union men" at his old home. In this letter he took occasion to declare his sentiments on various questions paramount at the time. Among these was the subject of a compromise with the South, against which he argued with great force and feeling. Again, he defended the Emancipation Proclamation, a measure to which many Union men were still unreconciled. He referred also to the arming of the negroes as a just and wise expedient; finally concluding with these expressive and felicitous words:

The signs look better. The Father of Waters again goes unvexed to the sea. Thanks to the great Northwest for it; nor yet wholly to them. Three hundred miles up they met New England, Empire, Keystone, and Jersey, hewing their way right and left. The sunny South, too, in more colors than one, also lent a helping hand. On the spot, their part of the history was jotted down in black and white. The job was a great national one, and let none be slighted who bore an honorable part in it. And while those who have cleared the great river may well be proud, even that is not all. It is hard to say that anything has been more bravely and well done than at Antietam, Murfreesboro, Gettysburg, and on many fields of less note. Nor must Uncle

Sam's web-feet be forgotten. At all the watery margins they have been present, not only on the deep sea, the broad bay, and the rapid river, but also up the narrow, muddy bayou, and wherever the ground was a little damp they have been and made their tracks. Thanks to all. For the great Republic — for the principle it lives by and keeps alive — for man's vast future — thanks to all. Peace does not appear so distant as it did. I hope it will come soon and come to stay; and so come as to be worth the keeping in all future time. It will then have been proved that among freemen there can be no successful appeal from the ballot to the bullet, and that they who take such appeal are sure to lose their case and pay the cost. And there will be some black men who can remember that, with silent tongue, and clinched teeth, and steady eye, and well-poised bayonet, they have helped mankind on to this great consummation; while I fear there will be some white ones unable to forget that with malignant heart and deceitful speech they have striven to hinder it. Still, let us not be over-sanguine of a speedy final triumph. Let us be quite sober. Let us diligently apply the means, never doubting that a just God, in His own good time, will give us the rightful result.

In a public proclamation, issued October 3, the President gives more formal expression to his satisfaction and gratitude, and calls upon the loyal people of the Union to unite in a day of thanksgiving for the improved prospects of the country.

The year that is drawing toward its close has been filled with the blessings of fruitful fields and healthful skies. To these bounties, which are so constantly enjoyed that we are prone to forget the source from which they come, others have been added which are of so extraordinary a nature that they cannot fail to penetrate and soften even the heart which is habitually insensible to the ever-watchful providence of Almighty

God. In the midst of a civil war of unequalled magnitude and severity, which has sometimes seemed to invite and provoke the aggressions of foreign states, peace has been preserved with all nations, order has been maintained, the laws have been respected and obeyed, and harmony has prevailed everywhere except in the theatre of military conflict, while that theatre has been greatly contracted by the advancing armies and navies of the Union. The needful diversion of wealth and strength from the fields of peaceful industry to the national defense has not arrested the plough, the shuttle, or the ship. The axe has enlarged the borders of our settlements, and the mines, as well of iron and coal as of the precious metals, have yielded even more abundantly than heretofore. Population has steadily increased, notwithstanding the waste that has been made in the camp, the siege, and the battle-field; and the country, rejoicing in the consciousness of augmented strength and vigor, is permitted to expect a continuance of years with large increase of freedom. No human counsel hath devised nor hath any mortal hand worked out these great things. They are the gracious gifts of the Most High God, who, while dealing with us in anger for our sins, hath nevertheless remembered mercy. It has seemed to me fit and proper that they should be solemnly, reverently, and gratefully acknowledged, as with one heart and voice, by the whole American people. I do, therefore, invite my fellow-citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea, and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next as a day of thanksgiving and prayer to our beneficent Father, who dwelleth in the heavens. And I recommend to them that, while offering up the ascriptions justly due to Him for such singular deliverances and blessings, they do also, with humble penitence for our national perverseness and disobedience, commend to His tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners, or sufferers in the

lamentable civil strife in which we are unavoidably engaged, and fervently implore the interposition of the Almighty Hand to heal the wounds of the nation, and to restore it, as soon as may be consistent with the divine purposes, to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquility, and union.

The brightening prospects of the Union cause quickly produced a better state of feeling at the North. In the fall elections of 1863, every State except New Jersey gave solid majorities on the Republican side, thus strengthening the administration and giving the President welcome assurances of popular approval. He had awaited with special anxiety the returns from Ohio, where the contest was fraught with peculiar significance. The Democrats had chosen for their candidate the notorious peace-at-any-price Vallandigham, against whom the Republicans had placed John Brough of Cleveland. On the night of the election, about ten o'clock, a message clicked on the wires in the telegraph office of the latter city, saying, "Where is John Brough? A. Lincoln." Brough was at hand, and directly the electric voice inquired, "Brough, about what is your majority now?" Brough replied, "Over 30,000." Lincoln requested Brough to remain at the office during the night. A little past midnight the question came again from Lincoln, "Brough, what is your majority by this time?" Brough replied, "Over 50,000." And the question was thus repeated and answered several times, with rapidly increasing majorities, till five o'clock in the morning, when the question came again, "Brough, what is your majority now?" The latter was able to respond, "Over 100,000." As soon as the words could be flashed back over the wire, there came: "*Glory to God in the highest. Ohio has saved the Nation. A. Lincoln.*"



The day after the election in Ohio (October 14, 1863) Lincoln said to Secretary Welles that he had felt more anxiety in regard to the results than he had in 1860 when he was chosen President. He could not have believed four years ago, he said, that one genuine American would or could be induced to vote for such a man as Vallandigham. Yet he had been made the candidate of a large party, and received a vote that is a discredit to the country. Mr. Welles adds: "The President showed a good deal of emotion as he dwelt on this subject."

After the battle of Gettysburg, a portion of the ground on which the engagement was fought was purchased by the State of Pennsylvania for a burial-place for the Union soldiers who were slain in that bloody encounter. The tract included seventeen and a half acres adjoining the town cemetery. It was planned to consecrate the ground with imposing ceremonies, in which the President, accompanied by his Cabinet and a large body of the military, was invited to assist. The day appointed was the 19th of November; and the chief orator selected was Massachusetts' eloquent son, Hon. Edward Everett. Following him it was expected that the President would add some testimonials in honor of the dead.

Lincoln and Everett were representatives of two contrasting phases of American civilization: the one, an outgrowth of the rough pioneer life of the West; the other, the product of the highest culture of the East. They had met for the first time on this memorable day. Everett's oration was a finished literary production. Smooth, euphonious, and elegant, it was delivered with the silvery tones and the graceful gestures of a trained and consummate speaker. When he had finished, and the applause that greeted him had died away, the multitude called vociferously for an

address from Lincoln. With an unconscious air, the President came forward at the call, put his spectacles on his nose, and read, in a quiet voice which gradually warmed with feeling, while his careworn face became radiant with the light of genuine emotion, the following brief address:

Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battle-field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting-place of those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this. But in a larger sense we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we *say* here, but it can never forget what they *did* here. It is for us, the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly carried on. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us, that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

The simple and sublime words of this short address shook the hearts of the listeners, and before the first sentence was ended they were under the spell of a mighty magician. They stood hushed, awed, and

melted, as the speaker enforced the solemn lesson of the hour, and brought home to them, in plain unvarnished terms, the duty which remained for them to do—to finish the work which the dead around them had given their lives to carry on. It was one of the briefest of the many speeches with which Lincoln had swayed the impulses and opinions of crowds of his fellow-men, but it is the one which will be remembered above all others as hallowed by the truest and loftiest inspiration. As the final sentence ended, amid the tears and sobs and cheers of the excited throng, the President turned to Mr. Everett, and, grasping his hand, exclaimed with sincerity, “I congratulate you on your success.” Mr. Everett responded in the fervor of his emotion, “Ah, Mr. President, how gladly would I exchange all my hundred pages to have been the author of your twenty lines!”

Of all Lincoln’s public utterances, this is unquestionably the most remarkable. The oration, brief and unpretending as it is, will remain a classic of the English language. “The Westminster Review,” one of the foremost of the great English quarterlies, said of it: “It has but one equal, in that pronounced upon those who fell in the first year of the Peloponnesian War; and in one respect it is superior to that great speech. It is not only more natural, fuller of feeling, more touching and pathetic, but we know with absolute certainty that *it was really delivered*. Nature here takes precedence of art—even though it be the art of Thucydides.”

“An illustration of the difference between oratory and inspiration” is Mr. John Bigelow’s happy characterization of the Gettysburg address. “It was,” he adds, “one of the most momentous incidents in the history of the Civil War. It may be doubted whether anything had then, or has since, been said of that

national strife conceived upon a higher and wiser spiritual plane. . . . It is perhaps, on the whole, the most enduring bit of eloquence that has ever been uttered on this continent; and yet one finds in it none of the tricks of the forum or the stage, nor any trace of the learning of the scholar, nor the need of it."

Major Harry T. Lee, who was himself a participant in the battle of Gettysburg and occupied a seat on the platform at the dedication, says that the people listened with marked attention through the two hours of Everett's noble and scholarly oration; but that when Lincoln came forward, and in a voice burdened with emotion uttered his simple and touching eulogy on "the brave men, living and dead, who struggled here," there was scarcely a dry eye in the whole vast audience.

Mr. John Russell Young, afterwards U. S. Minister to China, was present at the Gettysburg dedication, and says: "I sat behind Mr. Lincoln while Mr. Everett delivered his oration. I remember the great orator had a way of raising and dropping his handkerchief as he spoke. He spoke for two hours, and was very impressive, with his white hair and venerable figure. He was a great orator, but it was like a bit of Greek sculpture — beautiful, but cold as ice. It was perfect art, but without feeling. The art and beauty of it captured your imagination and judgment. Mr. Everett went over the campaign with resonant, clear, splendid rhetoric. There was not a word or a sentence or a thought that could be corrected. You felt that every gesture had been carefully studied out beforehand. It was like a great actor playing a great part. . . . Mr. Lincoln rose, walked to the edge of the platform, took out his glasses, and put them on. He was awkward. He bowed to the assemblage in his homely manner, and took out of his coat pocket a page of foolscap.

In front of Mr. Lincoln was a photographer with his camera, endeavoring to take a picture of the scene. We all supposed that Mr. Lincoln would make rather a long speech—a half-hour at least. He took the single sheet of foolscap, held it almost to his nose, and in his high tenor voice, without the least attempt at effect, delivered that most extraordinary address which belongs to the classics of literature. The photographer was bustling about, preparing to take the President's picture while he was speaking, but Mr. Lincoln finished before the photographer was ready."

It is stated that when President Lincoln reached the town of Gettysburg, on his way to attend the exercises at the cemetery, he inquired for "Old John Burns," the hero of the battle of Gettysburg, who left his farm and fought with the Union soldiers upon that bloody field. The veteran was sent for; and on his arrival the President showed him marked attention, taking him by the arm and walking with him in the procession through the streets to the cemetery.

Edward Everett, who was associated with Lincoln during these two or three days, says of the impression the President made on him: "I recognized in the President a full measure of the qualities which entitle him to the personal respect of the people. On the only social occasion on which I ever had the honor to be in his company, viz., the Commemoration at Gettysburg, he sat at the table of my friend David Willis, by the side of several distinguished persons, foreigners and Americans; and in gentlemanly appearance, manners, and conversation, he was the peer of any man at the table."

## CHAPTER XXVI

Lincoln and Grant — Their Personal Relations — Grant's Successes at Chattanooga — Appointed Lieutenant-general — Grant's First Visit to Washington — His Meeting with Lincoln — Lincoln's First Impressions of Grant — The First "General" Lincoln Had Found — "That Presidential Grub" — True Version of the Whiskey Anecdote — Lincoln Tells Grant the Story of Sykes's Dog — "We'd Better Let Mr. Grant Have his Own Way" — Grant's Estimate of Lincoln.

FROM the hour of Grant's triumph at Vicksburg to the close of the war, Lincoln never withdrew his confidence from the quiet, persistent, unpretending man who led our armies slowly but surely along the path of victory. As soon as the campaign at Vicksburg was over, Grant's sphere of operations was enlarged by his appointment to the command of the military division of the Mississippi. In November following he fought the famous battles of Chattanooga, including Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge; and, aided by his efficient corps commanders, Sherman, Thomas, and Hooker, gained a succession of brilliant victories for the Union cause. The wisdom of Grant's policy of concentration and "fighting it out" had now become apparent.

President Lincoln had watched closely the progress of these events, and had come to recognize in Grant the master spirit of the war, on the Northern side. Accordingly he determined to give him general command of all the Union armies. In December, 1863, a bill was introduced in the Senate by Hon. E. B. Washburne, of Illinois, and passed both houses of Congress, creating the rank of Lieutenant-General in the army.

President Lincoln approved the act, and immediately nominated Grant for the position. The nomination was confirmed; and on the 17th of March, 1864, Grant issued his first order as Lieutenant-General, assuming command of the armies of the United States, and announcing that his headquarters would be in the field and until further orders with the Army of the Potomac. Of this army he shrewdly remarked that it seemed to him it "had never fought its battles *through*." He proposed, first of all, to teach that army "not to be afraid of Lee." "I had known him personally," said Grant, "and *knew that he was mortal*." With characteristic energy he formed a simple but comprehensive plan of operations both East and West; sending Sherman on his great march to Atlanta and the sea, while he, with the Army of the Potomac, pushed straight for Richmond. These operations were vigorously urged, and when they were ended the war was ended. It was but little more than a year from the date of Grant's commission as Lieutenant-General till he received Lee's surrender at Appomattox.

Immediately upon Grant's appointment as Lieutenant-General, he was summoned to Washington. It was his first visit to the capital since the war began, and he was a stranger to nearly everyone from the President down. He arrived in the city on the 8th of March (1864), taking quarters at Willard's Hotel, where, when he went in to dinner, none knew "the quiet, rather stumpy-looking man, who came in leading a little boy — the boy who had ridden by his father's side through all the campaign of Vicksburg." But soon it was whispered about who was in the room, and there was a loud call for three cheers for Ulysses S. Grant, which were given with a will. In the evening General Grant attended a reception at the White House, passing in with the throng alone and unannounced. The quick

eye of the President discovered the identity of the modest soldier, and he was most heartily welcomed. "As soon as it was known that he was present, the pressure of the crowd to see the hero of Vicksburg was so great that he was forced to shelter himself behind a sofa. So irrepressible was the desire to see him that Secretary Seward finally induced him to mount a sofa, that this curiosity might be gratified. When parting from the President, he said, 'This has been rather the warmest campaign I have witnessed during the war.'" A graphic account of this interesting event is given by Secretary Welles, who records in his Diary (March 9, 1864): "Went last evening to the Presidential reception. Quite a gathering; very many that are not usually seen at receptions were attracted thither, I presume, from the fact that General Grant was expected to be there. He came about half-past nine. I was near the centre of the reception-room, when a stir and buzz attracted attention, and it was whispered that General Grant had arrived. The room was not full, the crowd having passed through to the East Room. I saw some men in uniform standing at the entrance, and one of them, a short, brown, dark-haired man, was talking with the President. There was hesitation, a degree of awkwardness, in the General. Soon word was passed around — 'Mr. Seward, General Grant is here,' and Seward, who was just behind me, hurried and took the General by the hand and led him to Mrs. Lincoln, near whom I was standing. The crowd gathered around the circle rapidly, and it being intimated that it would be necessary the throng should pass on, Seward took the General's arm and went with him to the East Room. There was clapping of hands in the next room as he passed through, and all in the East Room joined in it as he entered."

The next day at noon the General waited on the



President to receive his commission. The interview took place in the Cabinet room. There were present, besides the members of the Cabinet, General Halleck, a member of Congress, two of General Grant's staff-officers, his eldest son, Frederick D. Grant, and the President's private secretary. The ceremony was simple, the President saying, as he proffered the papers: "The nation's appreciation of what you have done, and its reliance upon you for what remains to be done in the existing great struggle, are now presented with this commission, constituting you Lieutenant-General in the Army of the United States. With this high honor devolves upon you also a corresponding responsibility. As the country herein trusts you, so, under God, it will sustain you. I scarcely need to add that with what I here speak for the nation goes my own hearty personal concurrence." The General responded briefly, promising to "accept the commission with gratitude for the high honor conferred. With the aid of the noble armies that have fought on so many fields for our common country, it will be my earnest endeavor not to disappoint your expectations. I feel the full weight of the responsibilities now devolving on me, and I know that if they are met it will be due to those armies, and above all to the favor of that Providence which leads both nations and men."

Before assuming personal command of the Army of the Potomac, as he had determined to do, General Grant found it necessary to return once more to the West. In his parting interview with Lincoln, he was urged to remain to dinner the next day and meet a brilliant party whom the lady of the White House had invited to do him special honor. The General answered, apologetically: "Mrs. Lincoln must excuse me. I must be in Tennessee at a given time." "But we can't excuse you," said the President. "Mrs. Lincoln's

dinner without you would be Hamlet with Hamlet left out." "I appreciate the honor Mrs. Lincoln would do me," said the General, "but time is very important now. I ought to be at the front, and a dinner to me means a million dollars a day lost to the country." Lincoln was pleased with this answer, and said cheerfully, "Well, we'll have the dinner without you."

After Lincoln's first meeting with General Grant he was asked regarding his personal impressions of the new commander. He replied, "Well, I hardly know what to think of him. He's the quietest little fellow you ever saw. He makes the least fuss of any man I ever knew. I believe on several occasions he has been in this room a minute or so before I knew he was here. It's about so all around. The only evidence you have that he's in any particular place is that he makes things move." To a subsequent inquiry as to his estimate of Grant's military capacities, Lincoln responded, with emphasis: "Grant is the first General I've had. *He's a General.*" "How do you mean, Mr. Lincoln?" his visitor asked. "Well, I'll tell you what I mean," replied Lincoln. "You know how it's been with all the rest. As soon as I put a man in command of the army, he'd come to me with the plan of a campaign, and about as much as to say: 'Now I don't believe I can do it, but if you say so I'll try it on,' and so put the responsibility of success or failure on me. They all wanted *me* to be the General. Now, it is n't so with Grant. He has n't told me what his plans are. I don't know and I don't want to know. I am glad to find a man who can go ahead without me. When any of the rest set out on a campaign they'd look over matters and pick out some one thing they were short of and they knew I could n't give them, and tell me they could n't hope to win unless they had it — and it was most generally cavalry. Now when

Grant took hold I was waiting to see what his pet impossibility would be, and I reckoned it would be cavalry, of course, for we had n't horses enough to mount what men we had. There were fifteen thousand men, or thereabouts, up near Harper's Ferry, and no horses to put them on. Well, the other day Grant sent to me about these very men, just as I expected; but what he wanted to know was whether he could make infantry of 'em or disband 'em. He does n't ask impossibilities of me, and he 's the first General I 've had that did n't." On another occasion Lincoln said of Grant: "The great thing about him is his cool persistency of purpose. He is not easily excited, and he has the grip of a bulldog. *When he once gets his teeth in, nothing can shake him off.*"

The President's satisfaction with the new commander was speedily communicated to him in a characteristically frank manner, in a letter dated April 30, 1864.

LIEUTENANT-GENERAL GRANT:—

Not expecting to see you before the Spring campaign opens, I wish to express in this way my entire satisfaction with what you have done up to this time, so far as I understand it. The particulars of your plan I neither know nor seek to know. You are vigilant and self-reliant; and, pleased with this, I wish not to obtrude any restraints or constraints upon you. While I am very anxious that any great disaster or capture of our men in great numbers shall be avoided, I know that these points are less likely to escape your attention than they would be mine. If there be anything wanting which is in my power to give, do not fail to let me know it. And now, with a brave army and a just cause, may God sustain you.

Yours very truly, A. LINCOLN.

General Grant himself wrote, on this point: "In my first interview with Mr. Lincoln alone, he stated to

me that he had never professed to be a military man, or to know how campaigns should be conducted, and never wanted to interfere in them; but that procrastination on the part of commanders, and the pressure of the people at the North and Congress, *which was always with him*, forced him into issuing his series of 'Military Orders' — one, two, three, etc. He did not know but they were all wrong, and did know that some of them were. All he wanted or had ever wanted was someone who would take the responsibility and act, and call on him for all the assistance needed, pledging himself to use all the power of the government in rendering such assistance. . . . The President told me he did not want to know what I proposed to do. But he submitted a plan of campaign of his own which he wanted me to hear and then do as I pleased about. He brought out a map of Virginia on which he had evidently marked every position occupied by the Federal and Confederate armies up to that time. He pointed out on the map two streams which empty into the Potomac, and suggested that the army might be moved on boats and landed between the mouths of these streams. We would then have the Potomac to bring our supplies, and the tributaries would protect our flanks while we moved out. I listened respectfully, but did not suggest that the same streams would protect Lee's flanks while he was shutting us up."

General Horace Porter, for some time Grant's chief of staff, says: "The nearest Mr. Lincoln ever came to giving General Grant an order for the movement of troops was during Early's raid upon Washington. On July 10, 1864, he telegraphed a long despatch from Washington, which contained the following language: 'What I think is that you should provide to retain your hold where you are, certainly, and bring the rest with you personally, and make a vigorous effort

to defeat the enemy's force in this vicinity. I think there is really a fair chance to do this, if the movement is prompt. This is what I think — given upon your suggestion, — and is not an order.' Grant replied that on reflection he thought it would have a bad effect for him to leave City Point, then his headquarters, in front of Richmond and Petersburg; and the President was satisfied with the dispositions which Grant made for the repulse of Early without taking command against him in person."

A curious incident revealing the intense interest with which Lincoln watched the career of Grant is related by Mr. J. Russell Jones, an old and trusted friend of the President, who joined the army at Vicksburg in time to witness its final triumph. Soon after Mr. Jones's return to Chicago, the President summoned him to Washington. With eager haste, after the first salutations were over, Lincoln declared the object for which he had secured the interview: "'I have sent for you, Mr. Jones, to know if that man Grant wants to be President.' Mr. Jones, although somewhat astonished at the question and the circumstances under which it was asked, replied at once, 'No, Mr. President.' 'Are you sure?' queried the latter. 'Yes,' said Mr. Jones, 'perfectly sure. I have just come from Vicksburg. I have seen General Grant frequently, and talked fully and freely with him about that and every other question; and I know he has no political aspirations whatever, and certainly none for the Presidency. His only desire is to see you re-elected and to do what he can under your orders to put down the rebellion and restore peace to the country.' 'Ah, Mr. Jones,' said Lincoln, 'you have lifted a great weight off my mind, and done me an immense amount of good; for I tell you, my friend, no man knows how deeply that Presidential grub gnaws till he has had it himself.'"

We cannot believe that Lincoln cherished any feeling of jealousy of the rising commander, or desired to interfere with whatever political ambition he might nourish. It was rather his desire to be assured of the single-hearted purpose of a military leader whom he had trusted and to whom he wished to confide still more important services in the conduct of the war.

It may be remembered that early in the war an anecdote went the rounds of the press to the effect that, in reply to a complaint that Grant had been guilty of drunkenness in the campaigns in the West, Lincoln remarked that he would "like to find out what kind of liquor Grant drank," so that he might "send some of it to the other Generals." The true version of that characteristic anecdote is this, as given by the late Judge T. Lyle Dickey, who was a Judge of the Illinois Supreme Court at the time of his death, and at the time of Grant's famous Vicksburg campaign was on the General's staff as chief of cavalry. Judge (then Colonel) Dickey had been sent to Washington with private despatches for the President and the Secretary of War. Lincoln and Dickey had been intimate friends for years, and during the latter's visit to the former on that occasion, Dickey remarked, "I hear that some one has been trying to poison you against Grant by reporting that he gets drunk. I wish to assure you, Mr. President, that there is not a scintilla of truth in the report." "Oh, Colonel," replied the President, "we get all sorts of reports here, but I'll say this to you: that if those accusing General Grant of getting drunk will tell me *where he gets his whiskey*, I will get a lot of it and send it around to some of the other Generals, who are badly in need of something of the kind."

After Lincoln and General Grant had become personally intimate, they had many enjoyable conversa-

tions and exchanges of anecdotes. Lincoln especially enjoyed telling the General of the various persons who had come to him with complaints and criticisms about the Vicksburg campaign. "After the place had actually surrendered," said the President, "I thought it was about time to shut down on this sort of thing. So one day, when a delegation came to see me, and had spent half an hour trying to show me the fatal mistake you had made in paroling Pemberton's army, and insisting that the rebels would violate their paroles and in less than a month confront you again in the ranks and have to be whipped all over again, I thought I could get rid of them best by telling them a story about Sykes's dog. 'Have you ever heard about Sykes's yellow dog?' said I to the spokesman of the delegation. He said he had n't. 'Well, I must tell you about him,' said I. 'Sykes had a yellow dog he set great store by, but there were a lot of small boys around the village, and that's always a bad thing for dogs, you know. These boys didn't share Sykes's views, and they were not disposed to let the dog have a fair show. Even Sykes had to admit that the dog was getting unpopular; in fact, it was soon seen that a prejudice was growing up against that dog that threatened to wreck all his future prospects in life. The boys, after meditating how they could get the best of him, finally fixed up a cartridge with a long fuse, put the cartridge in a piece of meat, dropped the meat in the road in front of Sykes's door, and then perched themselves on a fence a good distance off with the end of the fuse in their hands. Then they whistled for the dog. When he came out he scented the bait, and bolted the meat, cartridge and all. The boys touched off the fuse with a cigar, and in about a second a report came from that dog that sounded like a small clap of thunder. Sykes came bouncing out of the

house, and yelled: "What's up! Anything busted?" There was no reply, except a snicker from the small boys roosting on the fence; but as Sykes looked up he saw the whole air filled with pieces of yellow dog. He picked up the biggest piece he could find — a portion of the back, with a part of the tail still hanging to it, and, after turning it around and looking it all over, he said, "Well, I guess he'll never be much account again — *as a dog*." And I guess Pemberton's forces will never be much account again — *as an army*.' The delegation began looking around for their hats before I had quite got to the end of the story, and I was never bothered any more about superseding the commander of the Army of the Tennessee."

When General Grant was ready to begin active operations with the Army of the Potomac, he sent forward all available men from Washington. Secretary Stanton, anxious about the safety of the city, said to Grant one day: "General, I suppose you have left us enough men to strongly garrison the forts?" "No, I can't do that," was Grant's quiet answer. "Why not? Why not?" repeated the Secretary nervously. "Because I have already sent the men to the front." Said the Secretary, still more nervously: "That won't do. It's contrary to my plans. I cannot allow it. I will order the men back." To this Grant returned with quiet determination: "I shall need the men there, and you cannot order them back." "Why not? Why not?" cried the Secretary. "I believe that I rank the Secretary in this matter," remarked Grant. "Very well, we will see the President about that," responded the Secretary sharply. "I will have to take you to the President." "That is right. The President ranks us both." So they went to the President; and the Secretary, turning to General Grant, said, "Now, General, state your case." But the General calmly re-



plied, "I have no case to state. I am satisfied as it is." This threw the burden of statement on Secretary Stanton, and was excellent strategy. Meanwhile, General Grant had the men. When the Secretary had concluded, Lincoln crossed his legs, rested his elbow on his knee, and said in his quaint way and with a twinkle in his eye: "Now, Mr. Secretary, you know we have been trying to manage this army for nearly three years, and you know we have n't done much with it. We sent over the mountains and brought Mr. Grant, as Mrs. Grant calls him, to manage it for us; and now I guess we'd better let Mr. Grant *have his own way*." And Mr. Grant had it.

The favorable opinion which Lincoln held of Grant was strongly reciprocated. A short time before the former's death, Grant said: "I regard Lincoln as one of the greatest of men. He is unquestionably the greatest man I have ever encountered. The more I see of him and exchange views with him, the more he impresses me. I admire his courage, and respect the firmness he always displays. Many think from the gentleness of his character that he has a yielding nature; but while he has the courage to change his mind when convinced that he is wrong, he has all the tenacity of purpose which could be desired in a great statesman. His quickness of perception often astonishes me. Long before the statement of a complicated question is finished, his mind will grasp the main points, and he will seem to comprehend the whole subject better than the person who is stating it. He will take rank in history alongside of Washington."

## CHAPTER XXVII

Lincoln's Second Presidential Term — His Attitude toward it — Rival Candidates for the Nomination — Chase's Achillean Wrath — Harmony Restored — The Baltimore Convention — Decision "not to Swap Horses while Crossing a Stream" — The Summer of 1864 — Washington again Threatened — Lincoln under Fire — Unpopular Measures — The President's Perplexities and Trials — The Famous Letter "To Whom It May Concern" — Little Expectation of Re-election — Dangers of Assassination — A Thrilling Experience — Lincoln's Forced Serenity — "The Saddest Man in the World" — A Break in the Clouds — Lincoln Vindicated by Re-election — Cheered and Reassured — More Trouble with Chase — Lincoln's Final Disposal of him — The President's Fourth Annual Message — His Position toward the Rebellion and Slavery Reaffirmed — Colored Folks' Reception at the White House — Passage of the Amendment Prohibiting Slavery — Lincoln and the Southern Peace Commissioners — The Meeting in Hampton Roads — Lincoln's Impression of A. H. Stephens — The Second Inauguration — Second Inaugural Address — "With Malice toward None, with Charity for All" — An Auspicious Omen.

**T**HE year 1864 witnessed another Presidential election, and one which was attended by the most novel and extraordinary circumstances. It was held while a considerable portion of the people were engaged in armed rebellion against the authority of the National Government; and it was not participated in by the voters of several entire States. Aside from these unique features, it marked a most critical epoch in the history of the country, and in that of Abraham Lincoln as well. The policy and acts of the administration, even the question of the further prosecution of the war, were to be submitted to the sovereign tribunal of the people; and with their verdict would be recorded also the popular measure of approval or disapproval of President Lincoln. Those who knew him best during his first

official term pronounce him singularly free from plans and calculations regarding his own political future. He was too absorbed in public cares and duties, too nearly crushed by the great burdens resting upon him, to give thought or attention to questions of personal ambition. It had never been his aim, during his Presidential life, to look far ahead. He was content to deal wisely and soberly with important questions as they arose from day to day and hour to hour; to adapt himself and his actions to the exigencies of the present, and in that way to earn security for the future. He himself said, using a forcible and apt illustration borrowed from his early life: "The pilots on our Western rivers steer from *point to point*, as they call it — setting the course of the boat no farther than they can see; and that is all I propose to do in the great problems that are set before me."

Such a policy as that outlined by Lincoln, embraced in his homely and characteristic phrase of "pegging away," caused him to be greatly misunderstood and even distrusted in some quarters. As the time for the new election drew near, there was very pronounced dissatisfaction with him, particularly in New England. It was said of him, among other things, that he "lacked the essential qualities of a leader." Mr. Henry Greenleaf Pearson, the biographer of Governor Andrew of Massachusetts, illuminates this point in a few instructive sentences. "To comprehend this objection, which to us seems so astonishingly wide of the mark," says Mr. Pearson, "we must realize that whenever a New Englander of that generation uttered the word 'leader' his mind's eye was filled with the image of Daniel Webster. Even those who called the fallen statesman 'Ichabod' could not forget his commanding presence, his lofty tone about affairs of state, his sonorous professions of an ideal, his whole *ex cathedra*

attitude. All these characteristics supplied the aristocratic connotation of the word 'leader.' Of the broad democratic meaning of the term, the world had as yet received no demonstration. That Lincoln was in very truth the 'new birth of a new soil,' Lowell, with the advantage of literary detachment, was one of the first to discover and proclaim, both in his political essays and in the splendid stanzas of the 'Commemoration Ode.' "

While Lincoln seemingly gave little heed to the question of a second Presidential term, it must not be inferred that he was indifferent regarding it. His nature was one of those strong ones which, though desiring approbation, are yet able to live without it. His whole life had been a schooling in self-reliance and independence, and the last three years especially had rendered him an adept in that stern philosophy. But he was thoroughly human, and deep down in his nature was a craving for human sympathy and support. Knowing that he had done his best and was entitled to the full approval of his countrymen, he no doubt felt that it would be a pleasant thing to receive that approval by being called to serve them for another term. To one friend he remarked, using his old figure of "the people's attorney," "If the people think I have managed their case for them well enough to trust me to *carry it up to the next term*, I am sure I shall be glad to take it." He evidently dreaded the rebuke that would be implied in a failure to be renominated; yet it seemed unbecoming to him, in the critical condition of the country, to make any personal effort to that end. To these considerations were added his extreme weariness and longing for release from his oppressive burdens. He was also, as Mr. Welles records in his Diary, "greatly importuned and pressed by cunning intrigues."

From these various complications, Lincoln's embarrassment and perplexity as the time for holding the Republican Convention drew near were extreme. A journalistic friend (Mr. J. M. Winchell), who had a lengthy conversation with him on the subject, gives what is no doubt a correct idea of his state of mind at that period. "Mr. Lincoln received me," says Mr. Winchell, "kindly and courteously; but his manner was quite changed. It was not now the country about which his anxiety prevailed, but himself. There was an embarrassment about him which he could not quite conceal. I thought it proper to state in the outset that I wished simply to know whatever he was free to tell me in regard to his own willingness or unwillingness to accept a renomination. The reply was a monologue of an hour's duration, and one that wholly absorbed me, as it seemed to absorb himself. He remained seated nearly all the time. He was restless, often changing position, and occasionally, in some intense moment, wheeling his body around in his chair and throwing a leg over the arm. This was the only grotesque thing I recollect about him; his voice and manner were very earnest, and he uttered no jokes and told no anecdotes. He began by saying that as yet he was not a candidate for renomination. He distinctly denied that he was a party to any effort to that end, notwithstanding I knew that there were movements in his favor in all parts of the Northern States. These movements were, of course, without his prompting, as he positively assured me that with one or two exceptions he had scarcely conversed on the subject with his most intimate friends. He was not quite sure whether he desired a renomination. Such had been the responsibility of the office—so oppressive had he found its cares, so terrible its perplexities—that he felt as though the moment when he could relinquish

the burden and retire to private life would be the sweetest he could possibly experience. But, he said, he would not deny that a re-election would also have its gratification to his feelings. He did not seek it, nor would he do so; he did not desire it for any ambitious or selfish purpose; but after the crisis the country was passing through under his Presidency, and the efforts he had made conscientiously to discharge the duties imposed upon him, it would be a very sweet satisfaction to him to know that he had secured the approval of his fellow citizens and earned the highest testimonial of confidence they could bestow. This was the gist of the hour's monologue; and I believe he spoke sincerely. His voice, his manner, gave his modest and sensible words a power of conviction. He seldom looked me in the face while he was talking; he seemed almost to be gazing into the future. I am sure it was not a pleasant thing for him to seem to be speaking in his own behalf. For himself, he affirmed that he should make no promises of office to anyone as an inducement for support. If nominated and elected, he should be grateful to his friends; but the interests of the country must always be first considered."

The principal candidates talked of as successors to Lincoln were Secretary Chase, General Frémont, and General Grant. Of the latter, Lincoln said, with characteristic frankness and generosity: "If he could be more useful as President in putting down the rebellion, I would be content. He is pledged to our policy of emancipation and the employment of negro soldiers; and if this policy is carried out, it will not make much difference who is President." But General Grant's good sense prevailed over his injudicious advisers, and he promptly refused to allow his name to be presented to the convention.

The most formidable candidate for the Republican

nomination was Secretary Chase. The relations between him and the President had not latterly been very harmonious; and the breach was greatly widened by a bitter personal assault on Mr. Chase by General F. P. Blair, a newly elected Congressman from Missouri, made on the floor of the House, about the middle of April, under circumstances which led Mr. Chase to believe that the President inspired, or at least approved, the attack. Mr. Chase was very angry, and an open rupture between his friends and those of the President was narrowly averted. Mr. Riddle, Congressman from Mr. Chase's State (Ohio), relates that on the evening after General Blair's offensive speech he was to accompany Mr. Chase on a visit to Baltimore. "I was shown," says Mr. Riddle, "to the Secretary's private car, where I found him alone and in a frenzy of rage. A copy of Blair's speech had been shown him at the station, and I was the sole witness of his Achillean wrath. He threatened to leave the train at once and send the President his resignation; but was persuaded to go on to Baltimore. He wished to forward his resignation from there, but concluded to withhold it till his return to Washington the next day. At Baltimore," continues Mr. Riddle, "I excused myself, and took the return train for Washington. I did not overestimate the danger to the Union cause. It would be a fatal error to defeat Mr. Lincoln at the Baltimore Convention; yet how could he succeed, with the angry resignation of Mr. Chase, and the defection of his friends — the powerful and aggressive radicals? Reaching Washington, I went to the White House direct. I knew the President could not have been a party to Blair's assault, and I wanted his personal assurances to communicate to Mr. Chase at the earliest moment. I was accompanied by Judge Spaulding, an eminent member of the House, fully sharing Mr.

Chase's confidence, and somewhat cool toward the President. We found Mr. Lincoln drawn up behind his table, with papers before him, quite grim, evidently prepared for the battle which he supposed awaited him. Without taking a seat, hat in hand, I stated frankly, not without emotion, the condition of affairs, — the public danger, my entire confidence in him, my sole purpose there, the reason of Judge Spaulding's presence, and that we were there in no way as representatives of Mr. Chase. Mr. Lincoln was visibly affected. The tones of confidence, sympathy, personal regard, were strangers to him at that time. Softening, almost melting, he came round to us, shook our hands again and again, returned to his place, and standing there, took up and opened out, from their remote origin, the whole web of matters connected with the present complication. He spoke an hour — calm, clear, direct, simple. He reprehended Blair severely, and stated that he had no knowledge of his speech until after Blair left Washington. We were permitted to communicate this to Mr. Chase. He was satisfied with the President's explanation, and at the Baltimore Convention my large acquaintance enabled me to open the way for Governor Dennison of Ohio to become its presiding officer. All recognized the good effect of the organization of that body by the friends of Mr. Chase."

The National Republican Convention which met at Baltimore on the 8th of June adopted resolutions heartily approving the course of the administration and especially the policy of emancipation, and completed its good work by nominating Abraham Lincoln as its candidate for President for another term. Andrew Johnson, of Tennessee, was nominated for Vice-President. That Lincoln was gratified at this proof of confidence and esteem there can be no doubt. In his acceptance of the nomination, he said, with the most



delicate modesty: "I view this call to a second term as in no wise more flattering to myself than as an expression of the public judgment that I may better finish a difficult work than could one less severely schooled to the task." And with characteristic humor, he thanked a visiting delegation for their good opinion of him, saying, "I have not permitted myself to conclude that I am the best man in the country; but I am reminded of the old Dutch farmer who remarked to a companion that *it was not best to swap horses while crossing a stream.*"

In July, 1864, great excitement and alarm were occasioned in Washington by a body of Confederate cavalry under General Early, who actually attacked the fortifications of the city, cut off its railroad communication with the North, and ravaged the country about with fire and sword. For several days skirmishing was going on between the raiders and the troops in our fortifications. The fact that the President himself was under fire from the enemy on this occasion gave the episode a decided thrill of realism. He, with other government officials — largely, no doubt, from motives of curiosity — visited the scene of the disturbance and witnessed the miniature but sometimes spirited engagements. Among these visitors was Secretary Welles, who thus records his experiences (Diary, July 12, 1864): "Rode out today to Fort Stevens. Looking out over the valley below, where the continual popping of pickets was going on, I saw a line of our men lying close near the bottom of the valley. Senator Wade came up beside me. We went into the Fort, where we found the President, who was sitting in the shade, his back against the parapet toward the enemy. . . . As the firing from the Fort ceased, our men ran to the charge and the Rebels fled. We could see them running across the fields, seeking the woods on the brow

of the opposite hills. Below, we could see here and there some of our own men bearing away their wounded comrades. Occasionally a bullet from some long-range rifle passed over our heads. It was an interesting and exciting spectacle." Another account says: "President Lincoln visited the lines in person, and refused to retire, although urged to do so. He exposed himself freely at Fort Stevens, and a surgeon standing alongside of him was wounded by a ball which struck a gun and glanced." A gentleman named Neill, who lived in the country, about twelve miles from the city, gives a vivid conception of the imminence of the danger. "After breakfast, on Tuesday, July 12," says Mr. Neill, "I went as usual in a railway car to the city, and before noon my house was surrounded by General Bradley Johnson's insurgent cavalry, who had made an attempt to capture the New York express train, and had robbed the country store near by of its contents. The presence of the cavalry stopped all travel by railroad; and Senator Ramsey of Minnesota, who happened to be in Washington, could find no way to the North except by descending the Potomac to its mouth and then ascending Chesapeake Bay to Baltimore. While the cavalry was in the fields around my home, the enemy's infantry was marching toward the capital by what was called the Seventh Street road, and they set fire to the residence of Hon. Montgomery Blair, who had been Postmaster-General. As I sat in my room at the President's, the smoke of the burning mansion was visible; but business was transacted with as much quietness as if the foe were hundreds of miles distant. Mr. Fox, the assistant Secretary of the Navy, had in a private note informed the President that if there should be a necessity for him to leave the city he would find a steamer in readiness at the wharf at the foot of Sixth Street. About one o'clock in the

afternoon of each day of the skirmishing, the President would enter his carriage, and drive to the forts, in the suburbs, and watch the soldiers repulse the invaders." For several days Washington was in great danger of capture. Nearly all the forces had been sent forward to reinforce Grant, and the city was comparatively defenseless. But its slender garrison, mostly raw recruits, held out gallantly under the encouragement of the President, until Grant sent a column to attack Early, who promptly withdrew, and the crisis was over. This was the last time the enemy threatened the national capital. From that time he had enough to do to defend Richmond.

Lincoln labored under deep depression during the summer of 1864. The Army of the Potomac achieved apparently very little in return for its enormous expenditure of blood and treasure. Until the victories of Farragut in Mobile Bay, late in August, and Sherman at Atlanta a few days later, the gloom was unrelieved. The people were restless and impatient, and vented their displeasure upon the administration, holding it responsible for all reverses and disappointments, and giving grudging praise for success at any point. The popular displeasure was increased by the President's call for 500,000 additional troops, made July 18,—a measure which some of his strongest friends deprecated, as likely to jeopardize his re-election in November. "It is not a personal question at all," said Lincoln. "It matters not what becomes of *me*. *We must have the men*. If I go down, I intend to go like the Cumberland, with my colors flying." To the question, When is the war to end? he said, "Surely I feel as deep an interest in this question as any other can; but I do not wish to name a day, a month, or a year, when it is to end. We accepted this war *for an object* — a worthy object; and the war will end *when*

*that object is attained.* Under God, I hope it *never will end until that time.*"

The President's mind seemed constantly weighted with anxiety as to the movements and fortunes of our armies in the field. He could not sleep at night under this crushing load. Secretary Welles's Diary gives frequent instances of this. Once, after an engagement between the Western armies, the President, says Mr. Welles, "came to me with the latest news. He was feeling badly. Tells me a despatch was sent to him at the Soldiers' Home last night shortly after he got asleep, and so disturbed him that he had no more rest, but arose and came to the city and passed the remainder of the night awake and watchful." At another time, after a desperate battle between Grant and Lee, Mr. Welles says: "The President came into my room about one P. M. and told me he *had slept none last night*. He lay down for a short time on the sofa in my room, and detailed all the news he had gathered."

Ex-Governor Bross of Illinois furnishes an account of an interview with Lincoln during this dark period: "The last time I saw Mr. Lincoln, till, as a pall-bearer, I accompanied his remains to their last resting-place, was in the early part of August, 1864. It was directly after the frightful disaster at Petersburg, and I was on my way to the front, to recover, if possible, the body of my brother, Colonel John A. Bross, who fell there at the head of his regiment. I found the President with a large pile of documents before him. He laid down his pen and gave me a cordial but rather melancholy welcome, asking anxiously for news from the West. Neither of us could shut our eyes to the gloom which hung over the entire country. The terrible losses of the Wilderness, and the awful disaster at Petersburg, weighed heavily upon our spirits. To a question, I answered that the people expected a still

more vigorous prosecution of the war; more troops and needful appliances would, if called for, be forthcoming. 'I will tell you what the people want,' said the President, 'they want, and must have, *success*. But whether that come or not, I shall stay *right here* and do my duty. Here I shall be; and they may come and hang me on that tree' (pointing out of the window to one), 'but, God helping me, I shall never desert my post.' This was said in a way that assured me that these were the sentiments of his inmost soul."

The President, about this time, was greatly worried by Horace Greeley and others, who importuned him to receive negotiations for peace from the Confederate authorities. He at length said to Mr. Greeley, "I not only intend a sincere effort for peace, but you shall be a personal witness that it is made." On the same day that the call for additional troops was made, the President issued, through Mr. Greeley, the famous letter, "To Whom It May Concern," promising safe conduct to any person or persons authorized to present "any proposition which embraces the restoration of peace, the *integrity of the whole Union*, and the *abandonment of slavery*." Nothing came of the proposed negotiations, except to stop for a time the mischievous fault-finding; which was, of course, the result aimed at by Lincoln. The act was severely condemned by many Republicans; but Lincoln only said, "It is hardly fair for them to say the letter amounts to *nothing*. It will shut up Greeley, and satisfy the people who are clamoring for peace. That's *something*, anyhow!"

So much blame was heaped upon the Government, and so great was the dissatisfaction at the North, that Lincoln looked upon the election of his competitor, General McClellan, and his own retirement, as not improbable. An incident in evidence of his discouragement

ment is related by Secretary Welles. Entering the Executive office one day, Mr. Welles was asked to write his name across the back of a sealed paper which the President handed him. The names of several other members of the Cabinet were already on the paper, with the dates of signature. After the election, Lincoln opened the document in the presence of his Cabinet and read to them its contents, as follows:

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON,  
August 23, 1864.

This morning, as for some days past, it seems exceedingly probable that this administration will not be re-elected. Then it will be my duty to co-operate with the President-elect so as to save the Union between the election and the inauguration.

A. LINCOLN.

By this careful prevision had Lincoln pledged himself to give to his successor that unselfish and patriotic assistance of which he himself had stood so sorely in need.

As the desperation of the South and the opposition to Lincoln at the North increased, fears were entertained by his friends that an attempt might be made upon his life. Lincoln himself paid but little heed to these forebodings of evil. He said, philosophically: "I long ago made up my mind that if anybody wants to kill me, he will do it. If I wore a shirt of mail and kept myself surrounded by a bodyguard, it would be all the same. There are a thousand ways of getting at a man if it is desired that he should be killed. Besides, in this case, it seems to me, the man who would succeed me would be just as objectionable to my enemies — if I have any." One dark night, as he was going out with a friend, he took along a heavy cane, remarking good-humoredly that "mother" (Mrs. Lincoln) had "got a notion into her head that I shall be

assassinated, and to please her I take a cane when I go over to the War Department at nights — when I don't forget it."

It is probable that the attempts upon the life of President Lincoln were more numerous than is generally known. An incident of a very thrilling character, which might easily have involved a shocking tragedy, is related by Mr. John W. Nichols, who from the summer of 1862 until 1865 was one of the President's body-guard. "One night, about the middle of August, 1864," says Mr. Nichols, "I was doing sentinel duty at the large gate through which entrance was had to the grounds of the Soldiers' Home, near Washington, where Mr. Lincoln spent much time in summer. About eleven o'clock I heard a rifle-shot in the direction of the city, and shortly afterwards I heard approaching hoof-beats. In two or three minutes a horse came dashing up, and I recognized the belated President. The horse he rode was a very spirited one, and was Mr. Lincoln's favorite saddle-horse. As horse and rider approached the gate, I noticed that the President was bareheaded. As soon as I had assisted him in checking his steed, the President said to me: 'He came pretty near getting away with me, didn't he? He got the bit in his teeth before I could draw the rein.' I then asked him where his hat was; and he replied that somebody had fired a gun off down at the foot of the hill, and that his horse had become scared and had jerked his hat off. I led the animal to the Executive Cottage, and the President dismounted and entered. Thinking the affair rather strange, a corporal and myself started off to investigate. When we reached the place whence the sound of the shot had come — a point where the driveway intersects with the main road — we found the President's hat. It was a plain silk hat, and upon examination we discovered a

*bullet-hole* through the crown. We searched the locality thoroughly, but without avail. Next day I gave Mr. Lincoln his hat, and called his attention to the bullet-hole. He made some humorous remark, to the effect that it was made by some foolish marksman and was not intended for him; but added that he wished nothing said about the matter. We all felt confident it was an attempt to kill the President, and after that he never rode alone."

Amidst his terrible trials, Lincoln often exhibited a forced and sorrowful serenity, which many mistook for apathy. Even his oldest and best friends were sometimes deceived in this way. Hon. Leonard Swett relates a touching instance: "In the summer of 1864, when Grant was pounding his way toward Richmond in those terrible battles of the Wilderness, myself and wife were in Washington trying to do what little two persons could do toward alleviating the sufferings of the maimed and dying in the vast hospitals of that city. We tried to be thorough and systematic. We took the first man we came to, brought him delicacies, wrote letters to his friends, or did for him whatever else he most needed; then the next man, and so on. Day after day cars and ambulances were coming in, laden with untold sorrows for thousands of homes. After weeks of this kind of experience my feelings became so wrought up that I said to myself: The country cannot long endure this sacrifice. In mercy, both to North and South, every man capable of bearing arms must be hurried forward to Grant to end this fearful slaughter at the earliest possible moment. I went to President Lincoln at the White House, and poured myself out to him. He was sitting by an open window; and as I paused, a bird lit upon a branch just outside and was twittering and singing most joyously. Mr. Lincoln, imitating the bird, said: '*Tweet, tweet,*



*tweet*; is n't he singing sweetly?' I felt as if my legs had been cut from under me. I rose, took my hat, and said, 'I see the country is safer than I thought.' As I moved toward the door, Mr. Lincoln called out, in his hearty, familiar way, 'Here, Swett, come back and sit down.' Then he went on: 'It is impossible for a man in my position not to have thought of all those things. Weeks ago every man capable of bearing arms was ordered to the front, and everything you have suggested has been done.' "

The burdens borne by Lincoln seemed never to tell so seriously on his strength and vitality as in this terrible battle-summer of 1864. For him there had been no respite, no holiday. Others left the heat and dust of Washington for rest and recuperation; but he remained at his post. The demands upon him were incessant; one anxiety and excitement followed another, and under the relentless strain even his sturdy strength began to give way. "I sometimes fancy," said he, with pathetic good-humor, "that every one of the numerous grist ground through here daily, from a Senator seeking a war with France down to a poor woman after a place in the Treasury Department, darted at me with thumb and finger, picked out *their especial piece of my vitality*, and carried it off. When I get through with such a day's work there is only one word which can express my condition, and that is *flabbiness*." Once Mr. Brooks "found him sitting in his chair so collapsed and weary that he did not look up or speak when I addressed him. He put out his hand, mechanically, as if to shake hands, when I told him I had come at his bidding. Presently he roused a little, and remarked that he had had '*a mighty hard day*.'" Mr. Riddle, who saw him at this period, after some months' absence, says he was shocked, on gaining admission to the President, "by his appearance — that

of a *baited, cornered man*, always on the defense against attacks that he could not openly meet and defy or punish." Mr. Carpenter, an inmate of the White House, says: "Absorbed in his papers, he would become unconscious of my presence, while I intently studied every line and shade of expression in that furrowed face. There were days when I could scarcely look into it without crying. During the first week of the battles of the Wilderness he scarcely slept at all. Passing through the main hall of the domestic apartment on one of these days, I met him, clad in a long morning wrapper, pacing back and forth a narrow passage leading to one of the windows, his hands behind him, great black rings under his eyes, his head bent forward upon his breast,—altogether such a picture of the effects of sorrow, care, and anxiety as would have melted the hearts of the worst of his adversaries, who so mistakenly applied to him the epithets of tyrant and usurper."

Mr. Edward Dicey, the English historian, says: "Never in my knowledge have I seen a sadder face than that of the late President during the time his features were familiar to me. It is so easy to be wise after the event; but it seems to me now that one ought somehow to have foreseen that the stamp of a sad end was impressed by nature on that rugged, haggard face. The exceeding sadness of the eyes and their strange sweetness were the one redeeming feature in a face of unusual plainness, and there was about them that odd, weird look, which some eyes possess, of seeming to see more than the outer objects of the world around."

Lincoln's family and friends strove to beguile him of his melancholy. They took him to places of amusement; they walked and drove with him in the pleasantest scenes about the capital; and above all, they talked with him of times past, seeking to divert his

mind from its present distress by reviving memories of more joyous days. His old friends were, as Mr. Arnold states, "shocked with the change in his appearance. They had known him at his home, and at the courts in Illinois, with a frame of iron and nerves of steel; as a man who hardly knew what illness was, ever genial and sparkling with frolic and fun, nearly always cheery and bright. Now they saw the wrinkles on his face and forehead deepen into furrows; the laugh of old days was less frequent, and it did not seem to come from the heart. Anxiety, responsibility, care, thought, disasters, defeats, the injustice of friends, wore upon his giant frame, and his nerves of steel became at times irritable. He said one day, with a pathos which language cannot describe, 'I feel as though I shall *never be glad again.*'"

Hon. Schuyler Colfax repeats a similarly pathetic expression which fell from the lips of the afflicted President. "One morning," says Mr. Colfax, "calling upon him on business, I found him looking more than usually pale and careworn, and inquired the reason. He replied with the bad news he had received at a late hour the previous night, which had not yet been communicated to the press, adding that he had not closed his eyes or breakfasted; and, with an expression I shall never forget, he exclaimed, 'How willingly would I exchange places today with the soldier who sleeps on the ground in the Army of the Potomac!'"

A lady who saw Lincoln in the summer of 1864 for the first time, and who had expected to see "a very homely man," says: "I was totally unprepared for the impression instantly made upon me. So bowed and sorrow-laden was his whole person, expressing such weariness of mind and body, as he dropped himself heavily from step to step down to the ground. But his face!—oh, the pathos of it!—haggard, drawn

into fixed lines of unutterable sadness, with a look of loneliness, as of a soul whose depth of sorrow and bitterness no human sympathy could ever reach. I was so penetrated with the anguish and settled grief in every feature, that I gazed at him through tears, and felt I had stepped upon the threshold of a sanctuary too sacred for human feet. The impression I carried away was that I had seen, not so much the President of the United States, as *the saddest man in the world.*"

The changes in Lincoln's appearance were noted in the subdued, refined, purified expression of his face, as of one struggling almost against hope, but still patiently enduring. Mr. Brooks says, "I have known impressionable women, touched by his sad face and his gentle bearing, to go away in tears." Another observer, Rev. C. B. Crane, wrote at the time: "The President looks thin and careworn. His form is bowed as by a crushing load; his flesh is wasted as by incessant solicitude; and his face is thin and furrowed and pale, as though it had become spiritualized by the vicarious pain which he endured in bearing on himself all the calamities of his country." Truly it might be said of him, in the words of Matthew Arnold:

With aching hands and bleeding feet  
 We dig and heap, lay stone on stone;  
 We bear the burden and the heat  
 Of the long day, and wish 't were done.  
 Not till the hours of light return  
 All we have built do we discern.

In the tragic experiences of Lincoln in these dark days, the outlook was less gloomy than it had seemed to his tortured soul. He was even then, as Mr. John Bigelow puts it, "making for himself a larger place in history than he had any idea of." He "builded better than he knew"; and the "hours of light" were

soon to come when he would know what he had built and see the signs that promised better things. The Presidential election of 1864 demonstrated the abiding confidence of the people in him and his administration. Every loyal State but three — New Jersey, Delaware, and Kentucky — gave him its electoral vote; and his popular majority over McClellan, the Democratic candidate, was upwards of 400,000. Lincoln was cheered but not exultant at the news. Late in the evening of election day (November 8, 1864) he said, in response to public congratulations: "I am thankful to God for this approval of the people. But while deeply grateful for this mark of their confidence in me, if I know my own heart my gratitude is free from any taint of personal triumph. It is not in my nature to triumph over anyone; but I give thanks to Almighty God for this evidence of the people's resolution to stand by free government and the rights of humanity."

While the election returns were coming in, early in the evening, Lincoln was at the War Department with a little group assembled to hear them read. How different the scene from that in the quiet country town where he had waited for the returns on a similar occasion four years before! Then all was peace — the lull before the storm. Now the storm had broken, and its greatest fury was raging about that patient and devoted man who waited to hear the decision of the nation's supreme tribunal — the voice of the people whose decree would settle the fate of himself and of the country. Mr. Charles A. Dana, Assistant Secretary of War, who was in the group, gives this description of the scene: "General Eckert was coming in continually with telegrams containing election returns. Mr. Stanton would read them, and the President would look at them and comment upon them. Presently there came a lull in the returns, and Mr. Lincoln called me up

to a place by his side. 'Dana,' said he, 'have you ever read any of the writings of Petroleum V. Nasby?' 'No, sir,' I said, 'I have only looked at some of them, and they seemed to me funny.' 'Well,' said he, 'let me read you a specimen,' and pulling out a thin yellow-covered pamphlet from his breast pocket he began to read aloud. Mr. Stanton viewed this proceeding with great impatience, as I could see; but Mr. Lincoln paid no attention to that. He would read a page or a story, pause to con a new election telegram, and then open the book again and go ahead with a new passage. Finally Mr. Chase came in; and presently Mr. White-law Reid, and then the reading was interrupted. Mr. Stanton went to the door and beckoned me into the next room. I shall never forget his indignation at what seemed to him disgusting nonsense."

The morning following the election one of his private secretaries, Mr. Neill, coming to the Executive office earlier than usual, found Lincoln at his table engaged in his regular routine of official work. "Entering the room," says Mr. Neill, "I took a seat by his side, extended my hand, and congratulated him upon the vote, for the country's sake and for his own sake. Turning away from the papers which had been occupying his attention, he spoke kindly of his competitor, the calm, prudent General, and great organizer."

The importance of Lincoln's re-election, to the country and to himself, is forcibly stated by General Grant and Secretary Seward. The former telegraphed from City Point, the day following: "The victory is worth more to the country than a battle won." And the same evening, at a public gathering held to celebrate the event, Mr. Seward said: "The election has placed our President beyond the pale of human envy or human harm, as he is above the pale of human ambition. Henceforth all men will come to see him as we have

seen him — a true, loyal, patient, patriotic, and benevolent man. Having no longer any motive to malign or injure him, detraction will cease, and Abraham Lincoln will take his place with Washington and Franklin and Jefferson and Adams and Jackson — among the benefactors of the country and of the human race.”

Lincoln evidently felt greatly reassured by the result of what had seemed to him a very doubtful contest; but with the return of cheerfulness came also the dread of continuing his official labors. He began to long and plan for that happy period at the end of the second term when he should be free from public burdens. “Mrs. Lincoln desired to go to Europe for a long tour of pleasure,” says Mr. Brooks. “The President was disposed to gratify her wish; but he fixed his eyes on California as a place of permanent residence. He had heard so much of the delightful climate and the abundant natural productions of California that he had become possessed of a strong desire to visit the State and remain there if he were satisfied with the results of his observations. ‘When we leave this place,’ he said, one day, ‘we shall have enough, I think, to take care of us old people. The boys must look out for themselves. I guess mother will be satisfied with six months or so in Europe. After that I should really like to go to California and take a look at the Pacific coast.’”

After the Baltimore Convention, Mr. Chase proposed to resign his position as Secretary of the Treasury, but he was persuaded by influential friends of himself and Lincoln to reconsider his determination. Chief among these friends was Hon. John Brough, the sturdy “War Governor” of Ohio. Later in the summer of 1864 the relations between the President and Secretary Chase again became inharmonious; the latter determined a second time to resign, and communi-

cated that fact in a confidential letter to Governor Brough. Hon. Wm. Henry Smith, at that time Ohio's Secretary of State, and intimately acquainted with the circumstances as they occurred, says: "Mr. Brough went directly to Washington to bring about another reconciliation. After talking the matter over with Mr. Chase and Mr. Stanton, he called on the President and urged a settlement that would retain the services of Mr. Chase in the Treasury Department. Mr. Lincoln was very kind, and admitted the force of all that was urged; but finally said, with a quiet but impressive firmness, 'Brough, I think you had better *give up the job* this time.' And thereupon he gave reasons why it was unwise for Mr. Chase to continue longer in the Cabinet."

In the autumn, the Chief-Justiceship became vacant by the death of Judge R. B. Taney (October 11, 1864), and the friends of Mr. Chase, who was then in retirement, desired his elevation to that honorable seat. Congressman Riddle, who was designated to present the matter to the President, says: "After hearing what I had to say, Mr. Lincoln asked, 'Will this content Mr. Chase?' 'It is said that those bitten of the Presidency die of it,' I replied. His smile showed he would not take that answer. I added: 'Mr. Chase is conscious of ability to serve the country as President. We should expect the greatest from him.' 'He would not disappoint you, were it in his reach. But I should be sorry to see a Chief-Justice anxious to *swap* for it.' I said then what I had already said to Mr. Chase: that I would rather be the Chief-Justice than the President. I urged that the purity and elevation of Mr. Chase's character guaranteed the dignity of the station from all compromise; that momentous questions must arise, involving recent exercises of power, without precedents to guide the court; that the honor



of the Government would be safe in the hands of Mr. Chase. 'Would you *pack* the Supreme Court?' he asked, a little sharply. 'Would you have a Judge with no preconceived notions of law?' was my response. 'True, true,' was his laughing reply; 'how could I find anyone, fit for the place, who has not some definite notions on all questions likely to arise?'"

The proposed appointment of Mr. Chase as Chief-Justice was severely criticized by certain friends of Lincoln, who believed Mr. Chase was personally hostile to the President, and could not understand the latter's magnanimity in thus ignoring personal considerations. When told of these criticisms, Lincoln said: "My friends all over the country are trying to put up the bars between me and Governor Chase. I have a vast number of messages and letters from men who think they are my friends, imploring and warning me not to appoint him. Now I know more about Governor Chase's hostility to me than any of these men can tell me; but *I am going to nominate him.*" Which he did, and Chase became Chief-Justice in December, 1864.

The withdrawal of Secretary Chase from the Cabinet was soon followed by that of Postmaster-General Blair, who was succeeded by ex-Governor Dennison of Ohio. Blair received, says Mr. Welles in his Diary, a letter from the President, which, though friendly in tone, informed him that the time had arrived when it seemed best that he should retire, and requesting his resignation, which was promptly given. Mr. Welles says that the President subsequently informed him that "Mr. Chase had many friends who felt wounded that he should have left the Cabinet, and left alone. The friends of Blair had been his assailants, and the President thought that if he also left the Cabinet Chase and his friends would be satisfied and the administration would be relieved of irritating bickerings. The

relations of Blair with Stanton also were such that it was difficult for the two to remain." A little later came the resignation of Attorney-General Bates, which, says Mr. Welles, "has initiated more intrigues. A host of candidates are thrust forward — Evarts, Holt, Cushing, Whiting, and the Lord knows who, are all candidates." This gives but a faint idea of the embarrassments and dissensions among Lincoln's friends and official advisers, and of the ceaseless efforts and infinite tact that were needed to maintain a decent degree of harmony among them.

Early in December the President submitted to Congress his fourth annual message — a brief and business-like statement of the prospects and purposes of the Government. Its first sentence is: "The most remarkable feature in the military operations of the year is General Sherman's attempted march of three hundred miles directly through the insurgent region." Then follows a reference to the important movements that had occurred during the year, "to the effect of moulding society for durability in the Union." The document closes with the following explicit statement: "In presenting the abandonment of armed resistance to the national authority, on the part of the insurgents, as the only indispensable condition to ending the war on the part of the Government, I *retract nothing* heretofore said as to slavery. If the people should, by whatever mode or means, make it an executive duty to re-enslave such persons, *another, and not I*, must be their instrument to perform it. In stating a single condition of peace, I mean simply to say that the war will cease on the part of the Government whenever it shall have ceased on the part of those who began it."

New Year's day, 1865, was marked by a memorable incident. Among the crowds gathered in the White House grounds stood groups of colored people, watch-

ing with eager eyes the tide of people flowing in at the open door to exchange salutations with the President. It was a privilege heretofore reserved for the white race; but now, as the line of visitors thinned, showing that the reception was nearly over, the boldest of the colored men drew near the door with faltering step. Some were in conventional attire, others in fantastic dress, and others again in laborers' garb. The novel procession moved into the vestibule and on into the room where the President was holding the republican court. Timid and doubting, though determined, they ventured where their oppressed and down-trodden race had never appeared before, and with the keen, anxious, inquiring look on their dark faces, seemed like a herd of wild creatures from the woods, in a strange and dangerous place. The reception had been unusually well attended, and the President was nearly overcome with weariness; but when he saw the dusky faces of his unwonted visitors, he rallied from his fatigue and gave them a hearty welcome. They were wild with joy. Thronging about him, they pressed and kissed his hand, laughing and weeping at once, and exclaiming, "God bless Massa Linkum!" It was a scene not easy to forget: the thanks and adoration of a race paid to their deliverer.

Ever since issuing the Emancipation Proclamation Lincoln had earnestly desired that that measure should be perfected by a Constitutional amendment forever prohibiting slavery in the territory of the United States. He had discussed the matter fully with his friends in Congress, and repeatedly urged them to press it to an issue. Just before the Baltimore Convention, he urged Senator Morgan of New York, chairman of the National Republican Committee, to have the proposed amendment made the "key-note of the speeches and the key-note of the platform." Congressman

Rollins of Missouri relates that the President said to him, "The passage of the amendment will *clinch the whole matter*." The subject was already definitely before Congress. In December, 1863, joint resolutions for this great end had been introduced in the House by Hon. James M. Ashley of Ohio, and in the Senate by Hon. Charles Sumner of Massachusetts and Hon. J. B. Henderson of Missouri. Senator Trumbull of the Judiciary Committee, to whom the Senate resolutions were referred, reported a substitute for the amendment, which, in April, 1864, passed the Senate by a vote of thirty-eight to six; but reaching the House, June 15, it failed to get the necessary two-thirds vote and was defeated. At the next session of Congress the resolutions were again presented to the House, and after a protracted debate were passed (January 13, 1865) by a vote of one hundred and nineteen to fifty-six. Illinois was the first State to ratify the amendment; and others promptly followed. Lincoln was grateful and delighted. He remarked, "This ends the job"; adding, "I feel proud that Illinois is a little ahead."

Overtures having been made, through General Grant, for a meeting between the President and certain "peace commissioners" representing the belligerents, Lincoln, anxious that nothing should be left undone that might evidence his desire to bring the war to a close, consented to the interview. On the morning of February 2, 1865, he left Washington, quite privately, in order to accomplish his mission without awakening the gossip and criticism which publicity would excite. At Fortress Monroe he was joined by Secretary Seward, who seems to have been the only member of the Cabinet who knew of the President's intention to meet the Southern Commissioners. Lincoln took the full responsibility, as he often did when dealing with risky or unpopular

measures. "None of the Cabinet were advised of this move, and without exception I think it struck them unfavorably that the Chief Magistrate should have gone on such a mission," is the comment of Secretary Welles, — although he adds, "The discussion will be likely to tend to peace."

The next morning (February 3) the President and Mr. Seward received the Southern Commissioners — Stephens, Hunter, and Campbell — on board the U. S. steam transport "River Queen" in Hampton Roads. The conference, says Mr. Seward, "was altogether informal. There was no attendance of secretaries, clerks, or other witnesses. Nothing was written or read. The conversation, although earnest and free, was calm and courteous and kind on both sides. The Richmond party approached the subject rather indirectly, and at no time did they either make categorical demands or tender formal stipulations or absolute refusals. Nevertheless, during the conference, which lasted four hours, the several points at issue between the Government and the insurgents were distinctly raised and discussed, fully, intelligently, and in an amicable spirit."

The meeting was fruitless. The commissioners asked, as a preliminary step, the recognition of Jefferson Davis as President of the Southern Confederacy. Lincoln declined, stating that "the only ground on which he could rest the justice of the war — either with his own people or with foreign powers — was that it was not a war of conquest, for the States had never been separated from the Union. Consequently he could not recognize another government inside of the one of which he alone was President, nor admit the separate independence of States that were yet a part of the Union. 'That,' said he, 'would be doing what you have so long asked Europe to do in vain, and be resigning the only thing the armies of the Union have

been fighting for.' Mr. Hunter, one of the commissioners, made a long reply to this, insisting that the recognition of Davis's power to make a treaty was the first and indispensable step to peace, and referred to the correspondence between King Charles I. and his Parliament as a trustworthy precedent of a constitutional ruler treating with rebels. Lincoln's face then wore that indescribable expression which generally preceded his hardest hits, as he remarked: 'Upon questions of history I must refer you to Mr. Seward, for he is posted in such things, and I don't pretend to be. My only distinct recollection of the matter is that *Charles lost his head.*' "

Alexander H. Stephens, one of the commissioners at the meeting on board the "River Queen," and the Vice-President of the waning Confederacy, was a very small man physically, with a complexion so yellow as to suggest an ear of ripe corn. Lincoln gave the following humorous account of the meeting with him: "Mr. Stephens had on an overcoat about three sizes too big for him, with an old-fashioned high collar. The cabin soon began to get pretty warm, and after a while he stood up and pulled off his big coat. He slipped it off just about as you would husk an ear of corn. I could n't help thinking, as I looked first at the overcoat and then at the man, 'Well, that's the *biggest shuck* and the *smallest nubbin* I ever laid eyes on.' "

So strongly were Lincoln's hopes fixed on finding some possible basis for a peaceful restoration of the Union that a few days after his return from his meeting with the Southern Peace Commissioners he presented to the Cabinet (February 5, 1865) a scheme for paying to the Southern States a partial compensation for the loss of their slaves, provided they would at once discontinue armed resistance to the Federal Government. It was, says Mr. Welles, who was present at the meet-

ing referred to, as "a proposition for paying the expenses of the war for two hundred days, or four hundred millions of dollars, to the rebellious States, to be for the extinguishment of slavery. The scheme did not meet with favor, and was dropped." But it showed, adds Mr. Welles, "the earnest desire of the President to conciliate and effect peace."

The evening of March 3, 1865, the President had remained with his Cabinet at the Capitol until a late hour, finishing the business pertaining to the last acts of the old Congress. His face had the ineffaceable care-worn look, yet his manner was cheerful, and he appeared to be occupied with the work of the moment, to the exclusion of all thoughts of the future or of the great event of the morrow.

Rain prevailed during the morning of inauguration day, but before noon it had ceased falling. The new Senate, convened for a special session, was organized, and Andrew Johnson was sworn in its presence into the office of Vice-President. Shortly after twelve o'clock, Lincoln entered the chamber and joined the august procession, which then moved to the eastern portico. As Lincoln stepped forward to take the oath of office, a flood of sunlight suddenly burst from the clouds, illuminating his face and form as he bowed to the acclamations of the people. Speaking of this incident next day, he said, "Did you notice that sunburst? It made my heart jump." Cheers and shouts rent the air as the President prepared to speak his inaugural. He raised his arm, and the crowd hushed to catch his opening words. He paused, as though thronging memories impeded utterance; then, in a voice clear and strong, but touched with pathos, he read that eloquent and imperishable composition, the Second Inaugural Address.

*Fellow-Countrymen:* At this second appearing to take the oath of the Presidential office, there is less

occasion for an extended address than there was at the first. Then a statement, somewhat in detail, of a course to be pursued, seemed fitting and proper. Now, at the expiration of four years, during which public declarations have been constantly called forth on every point and phase of the great contest which still absorbs the attention and engrosses the energies of the Nation, little that is new could be presented. The progress of our arms, upon which all else chiefly depends, is as well known to the public as to myself; and it is, I trust, reasonably satisfactory and encouraging to all. With high hope for the future, no prediction in regard to it is ventured.

On the occasion corresponding to this, four years ago, all thoughts were anxiously directed to an impending civil war. All dreaded it, all sought to avoid it. While the inaugural address was being delivered from this place, devoted altogether to saving the Union without war, insurgent agents were in the city, seeking to destroy it with war, — seeking to dissolve the Union, and divide the effects by negotiation. Both parties deprecated war, but one of them would make war rather than let the Nation survive, and the other would accept war rather than let it perish; and the war came. One-eighth of the whole population were colored slaves, not distributed generally over the Union, but localized in the southern part of it. These slaves constituted a peculiar and powerful interest. All knew that this interest was somehow the cause of the war. To strengthen, perpetuate, and extend this interest was the object for which the insurgents would rend the Union by war, while the Government claimed no right to do more than to restrict the territorial enlargement of it.

Neither party expected for the war the magnitude or the duration which it has already attained. Neither anticipated that the cause of the conflict might cease when, or even before the conflict itself should cease. Each looked for an easier triumph, and a result less



fundamental and astounding. Both read the same Bible, and pray to the same God, and each invokes His aid against the other. It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces; but let us judge not, that we be not judged. The prayer of both could not be answered. That of neither has been answered fully. The Almighty has his own purposes. "Woe unto the world because of offenses, for it must needs be that offenses come, but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh." If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of those offenses, which, in the Providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through His appointed time, He now wills to remove, and that He gives to North and South this terrible war, as the woe due to those by whom the offense came, shall we discern therein any departure from those Divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to Him? Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn by the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said: "The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether."

With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and for his orphan; to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.

This address was probably, next to the Gettysburg oration, Lincoln's most eloquent and touching public appeal. Gladstone of England said of it: "I am taken

captive by so striking an utterance as this. I see in it the effect of sharp trial, when rightly borne, to raise men to a higher level of thought and action. It is by cruel suffering that nations are sometimes born to a better life. So it is with individual men. Lincoln's words show that upon him anxiety and sorrow have wrought their true effect."

As the procession moved from the Capitol to the White House, at the close of the inaugural ceremonies, a bright star was visible in the heavens. The crowds gazing upon the unwonted phenomenon noted it as an auspicious omen, like the baptism of sunshine which had seemed to consecrate the President anew to his exalted office.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

Close of the Civil War — Last Acts in the Great Tragedy — Lincoln at the Front — A Memorable Meeting — Lincoln, Grant, Sherman, and Porter — Life on Shipboard — Visit to Petersburg — Lincoln and the Prisoners — Lincoln in Richmond — The Negroes Welcoming their "Great Messiah" — A Warm Reception — Lee's Surrender — Lincoln Receives the News — Universal Rejoicing — Lincoln's Last Speech to the Public — His Feelings and Intentions toward the South — His Desire for Reconciliation.

**G**REAT events crowded upon each other in the last few weeks of the Civil War; and we must pass rapidly over them, giving special prominence only to those with which President Lincoln was personally connected. The Army of the Potomac under Grant, which for nearly a year had been incessantly engaged with the army of General Lee, had forced the latter, fighting desperately at every step, back through the Wilderness, into the defenses about Richmond; and Lee's early surrender or retreat southward seemed the only remaining alternatives. But the latter course, disastrous as it would have been for the Confederacy, was rendered impracticable by the comprehensive plan of operations that had been adopted a year before. Interposed between Richmond and the South was now the powerful army of General Sherman. This daring and self-reliant officer, after his brilliant triumph at Atlanta the previous fall, had pushed on to Savannah and captured that city also; then turning his veteran columns northward, he had swept like a dread meteor through South Carolina, destroying the proud city of Charleston, and then Columbia, the State capital. General Johnston, with a strong force, vainly tried to

stay his progress through North Carolina; but after a desperate though unsuccessful battle at Bentonville (March 20, 1865), the opposition gave way, and the Union troops occupied Goldsboro, an important point a hundred miles south of Richmond, commanding the Southern railway communications of the Confederate capital. The situation was singularly dramatic and impressive. In this narrow theatre of war were now being rendered, with all the leading actors on the stage, the closing scenes of that great and bloody tragedy. Grant on the north and Sherman on the south were grinding Lee and Johnston between them like upper and nether millstones.

The last days of March brought unmistakable signs of the speedy breaking-up of the rebellion. Lincoln, filled with anticipation not unmixed with anxiety, wished to be at the front. "When we came to the end of the War and the breaking-up of things," says General Grant, "one of Lincoln's friends said to me, 'I think Lincoln would like to come down and spend a few days at City Point, but he is afraid if he does come it might look like interfering with the movements of the army, and after all that has been said about other Generals he hesitates.' I was told that if Lincoln had a hint from me that he would be welcome he would come by the first boat. Of course I sent word that the President could do me no greater honor than to come down and be my guest. He came down, and we spent several days riding around the lines. He was a fine horseman. He talked, and talked, and talked; he seemed to enjoy it, and said, 'How grateful I feel to be with the boys and see what is being done at Richmond!' He never asked a question about the movements. He would say, 'Tell me what has been done; not what is to be done.' He would sit for hours tilted back in his chair, with his hand shading his eyes, watching the movements

of the men with the greatest interest." Another account says: "Lincoln made many visits with Grant to the lines around Richmond and Petersburg. On such occasions he usually rode one of the General's fine bay horses, called 'Cincinnati.' He was a good horseman, and made his way through swamps and over corduroy roads as well as the best trooper in the command. The soldiers invariably recognized him, and greeted him, wherever he appeared amongst them, with cheers that were no lip service, but came from the depth of their hearts. He always had a pleasant salute or a friendly word for the men in the ranks."

Aside from the President's desire to be at the front at this critical time, he had an almost feverish anxiety to escape from the petty concerns and details of official life in Washington. In Welles's Diary is this entry (March 23, 1865): "The President has gone to the front, partly to get rid of the throng [office-seekers, politicians, etc.] that is pressing on him. The more he yields, the greater the pressure. It has now become such that he is compelled to flee. There is no doubt he is much worn down. Besides, he wishes the war terminated, and, to this end, that severe terms shall not be exacted of the Rebels."

Much of the time during the President's visit to the army he had his quarters on the steamer "River Queen," lying in the James river at City Point. It was the same vessel on which he had received the Southern peace commissioners a month before, and the one on which he had made the journey from Washington. On the 27th of March a memorable interview occurred in the cabin of this vessel, between President Lincoln, Generals Grant and Sherman, and Admiral Porter. General Sherman thus describes the interview: "I left Goldsboro on the 25th of March and reached City Point on the afternoon of the 27th.

I found General Grant and staff occupying a neat set of log huts, on a bluff overlooking the James river. The General's family was with him. We had quite a long and friendly talk, when Grant remarked that the President was near by in a steamer lying at the dock, and he proposed that we should call at once. We did so, and found Mr. Lincoln on board the 'River Queen.' We had met in the early part of the war; he recognized me, and received me with a warmth of manner and expression that was most grateful. We sat some time in the after-cabin, and Mr. Lincoln made many inquiries about the events which attended the march from Savannah to Goldsboro, and seemed to enjoy the humorous stories about 'our bummers,' of which he had heard much. When in lively conversation his face brightened wonderfully, but if the conversation flagged it assumed a sad and sorrowful expression. General Grant and I explained to him that my next move from Goldsboro would bring my army, increased to 80,000 men by Schofield's and Terry's reinforcements, in close communication with Grant's army then investing Lee and Richmond; and that unless Lee could effect his escape and make junction with Johnston in North Carolina, he would soon be shut up in Richmond with no possibility of supplies, and would have to surrender. Mr. Lincoln was extremely interested in this view of the case, and we explained that Lee's only chance was to escape, join Johnston, and, being then between me in North Carolina and Grant in Virginia, he could choose which to fight. Mr. Lincoln seemed impressed with this; but General Grant explained that at the very moment of our conversation General Sheridan was pressing his cavalry across James River from the north to the south, that with this cavalry he would so extend his left below Petersburg as to meet the South Shore Road, and that if Lee should 'let go' his fortified

lines he (Grant) would follow him so close that he could not possibly fall on me alone in North Carolina. I in like manner expressed the fullest confidence that my army in North Carolina was willing to cope with Lee and Johnston combined, till Grant could come up. But we both agreed that one more bloody battle was likely to occur before the close of the war. Mr. Lincoln repeatedly inquired as to General Schofield's ability to maintain his position in my absence, and seemed anxious that I should return to North Carolina. More than once he exclaimed, 'Must more blood be shed? Cannot this last bloody battle be avoided?' We explained that we had to presume that General Lee was a real general; that he must see that Johnston alone was no barrier to my progress, and that if my army of 80,000 veterans should reach Burksville he was lost in Richmond; and that we were forced to believe he would not await that inevitable conclusion, but would make one more desperate effort."

General Sherman adds this personal tribute to Lincoln to the account of the interview on board the "River Queen": "When I left Mr. Lincoln I was more than ever impressed by his kindly nature, his deep and earnest sympathy with the afflictions of the whole people, resulting from the war, and by the march of hostile armies through the South. I felt that his earnest desire was to end the war speedily, without more bloodshed or devastation, and to restore all the men of both sections to their homes. In the language of his second inaugural address, he seemed to have 'charity for all, malice toward none,' and above all an absolute faith in the courage, manliness, and integrity of the armies in the field. When at rest or listening, his legs and arms seemed to hang almost lifeless, and his face was careworn and haggard; but the moment he began to talk his face lightened up, his tall form,

as it were, unfolded, and he was the very impersonation of good humor and fellowship. The last words I recall as addressed to me were that he would feel better when I was back at Goldsboro. We parted at the gangway of the 'River Queen,' about noon of March 28, and I never saw him again. Of all the men I ever met, he seemed to possess more of the elements of greatness, combined with goodness, than any other."

A few days after the interview described by General Sherman, the President changed his quarters to the cabin of the "Malvern," Admiral Porter's flagship. The Admiral says: "The 'Malvern' was a small vessel with poor accommodations, and not at all fitted to receive high personages. She was a captured blockade-runner, and had been given to me as a flag-ship. I offered the President my bed, but he positively declined it, and elected to sleep in a small state-room outside of the cabin occupied by my secretary. It was the smallest kind of a room, six feet long by four and a half feet wide—a small kind of a room for the President of the United States to be domiciled in; but Mr. Lincoln seemed pleased with it. When he came to breakfast the next morning, I inquired how he had slept: 'I slept well,' he answered, 'but you can't put a long sword into a short scabbard. I was *too long* for that berth.' Then I remembered he was over six feet four inches, while the berth was only six feet. That day, while we were out of the ship, all the carpenters were put to work; the state-room was taken down and increased in size to eight feet by six and a half feet. The mattress was widened to suit a berth of four feet width, and the entire state-room remodelled. Nothing was said to the President about the change in his quarters when he went to bed; but next morning he came out smiling, and said: 'A miracle happened



last night; I shrank six inches in length and about a foot sideways. I got somebody else's big pillow, and slept in a better bed than I did on the "River Queen." He enjoyed it greatly; but I do think if I had given him two fence-rails to sleep on he would not have found fault. That was Abraham Lincoln in all things relating to his own comfort. He would never permit people to put themselves out for him under any circumstances."

On the 2d of April the stronghold of Petersburg fell into the hands of the Union troops. Lincoln, accompanied by Admiral Porter, visited the city. They joined General Grant, and sat with him for nearly two hours upon the porch of a comfortable little house with a small yard in front. Crowds of citizens soon gathered at the fence to gaze upon these remarkable men of whom they had heard so much. The President's heart was filled with joy, for he felt that this was "the beginning of the end." Admiral Porter says: "Several regiments passed us *en route*, and they all seemed to recognize the President at once. 'Three cheers for Uncle Abe!' passed along among them, and the cheers were given with a vim which showed the estimation in which he was held by the soldiers. That evening," continues Admiral Porter, "the sailors and marines were sent out to guard and escort in some prisoners, who were placed on board a large transport lying in the stream. There were about a thousand prisoners, more or less. The President expressed a desire to go on shore. I ordered the barge and went with him. We had to pass the transport with the prisoners. They all rushed to the side with eager curiosity. All wanted to see the Northern President. They were perfectly content. Every man had a chunk of meat and a piece of bread in his hand, and was doing his best to dispose of it. 'That's Old Abe,'

said one, in a low voice. 'Give the old fellow three cheers,' said another; while a third called out, 'Hello, Abe, your bread and meat's better than pop-corn!' It was all good-natured, and not meant in unkindness. I could see no difference between them and our own men, except that they were ragged and attenuated for want of wholesome food. They were as happy a set of men as ever I saw. They could see their homes looming up before them in the distance, and knew that the war was over. 'They will never shoulder a musket again in anger,' said the President, 'and if Grant is wise he will leave them their guns to shoot crows with. It would do no harm.'"

The next day (April 3) the Union advance, under General Weitzel, reached and occupied Richmond. Lee was in retreat, with Grant in close pursuit. When the news of the downfall of the Confederate capital reached Lincoln on board the "Malvern," he exclaimed fervently: "Thank God that I have lived to see this! It seems to me I have been dreaming a horrid dream for four years, and now the nightmare is gone. *I want to see Richmond.*"

The vessel started up the river, but found it extremely difficult to proceed, as the channel was filled with torpedoes and obstructions, and they were obliged to wait until a passage could be cleared. Admiral Porter thus describes what followed: "When the channel was reported clear of torpedoes (a large number of which were taken up), I proceeded up to Richmond in the 'Malvern,' with President Lincoln. Every vessel that got through the obstructions wished to be the first one up, and pushed ahead with all steam; but they grounded, one after another, the 'Malvern' passing them all, until she also took the ground. Not to be delayed, I took the President in my barge, and with a tug ahead with a file of marines on board we

continued on up to the city. There was a large bridge across the James about a mile below the landing, and under this a party in a small steamer were caught and held by the current, with no prospect of release without assistance. I ordered the tug to cast off and help them, leaving us in the barge to go on alone. Here we were in a solitary boat, after having set out with a number of vessels flying flags at every mast-head, hoping to enter the conquered capital in a manner befitting the rank of the President of the United States, with a further intention of firing a national salute in honor of the happy result. Mr. Lincoln was cheerful, and had his 'little story' ready for the occasion. 'Admiral, this brings to my mind a fellow who once came to me to ask for an appointment as minister abroad. Finding he could not get that, he came down to some more modest position. Finally he asked to be made a tide-waiter. When he saw he could not get that, he asked me for *an old pair of trousers*. It is sometimes well to be *humble*.'

"I had never been to Richmond before by that route," continues Admiral Porter, "and did not know where the landing was; neither did the cockswain nor any of the barge's crew. We pulled on, hoping to see someone of whom we could inquire, but no one was in sight. The street along the river-front was as deserted as if this had been a city of the dead. The troops had been in possession some hours, but not a soldier was to be seen. The current was now rushing past us over and among rocks, on one of which we finally stuck; but I backed out and pointed for the nearest landing. There was a small house on this landing, and behind it were some twelve negroes digging with spades. The leader of them was an old man sixty years of age. He raised himself to an upright position as we landed, and put his hands up to

his eyes. Then he dropped his spade and sprang forward. 'Bress de Lord,' he said, 'dere is *de great Messiah!* I knowed him as soon as I seed him. He's bin in my heart fo' long yeahs, an' he's cum at las' to free his chillun from deir bondage! Glory, Hallelujah!' And he fell upon his knees before the President and kissed his feet. The others followed his example, and in a minute Mr. Lincoln was surrounded by these people, who had treasured up the recollection of him caught from a photograph, and had looked up to him for four years as the one who was to lead them out of captivity. It was a touching sight — that aged negro kneeling at the feet of the tall, gaunt-looking man who seemed in himself to be bearing all the grief of the nation, and whose sad face seemed to say, 'I suffer for you all, but will do all I can to help you.' Mr. Lincoln looked down on the poor creatures at his feet. He was much embarrassed at his position. 'Don't kneel to me,' he said, 'that is not right. You must kneel to God only, and thank Him for the liberty you will hereafter enjoy. I am but God's humble instrument; but you may rest assured that as long as I live no one shall put a shackle on your limbs, and you shall have all the rights which God has given to every other free citizen of this Republic.' It was a minute or two before I could get the negroes to rise and leave the President. The scene was so touching that I hated to disturb it, yet we could not stay there all day; we had to move on; so I requested the patriarch to withdraw from about the President with his companions, and let us pass on. 'Yes, Mars,' said the old man, 'but after bein' so many yeahs in de desert widout water, it's mighty pleasant to be lookin' at las' on our spring of life. 'Scuse us, sir; we means no disrepec' to Mars Lincoln; we means all love and gratitude.' And then, joining hands together in a

ring, the negroes sang a hymn, with the melodious and touching voices possessed only by the negroes of the South. The President and all of us listened respectfully while the hymn was being sung. Four minutes at most had passed away since we first landed at a point where, as far as the eye could reach, the streets were entirely deserted; but now what a different scene appeared as that hymn went forth from the negroes' lips! The streets seemed to be suddenly alive with the colored race. They seemed to spring from the earth. They came tumbling and shouting, from over the hills and from the water-side, where no one was seen as we had passed. The crowd immediately became very oppressive. We needed our marines to keep them off. I ordered twelve of the boat's crew to fix bayonets to their rifles and surround the President, all of which was quickly done; but the crowd poured in so fearfully that I thought we all stood a chance of being crushed to death. At length the President spoke. He could not move for the mass of people — he had to do something. 'My poor friends,' he said, 'you are free — free as air. You can cast off the name of slave and trample upon it; it will come to you no more. Liberty is your birthright. God gave it to you as He gave it to others, and it is a sin that you have been deprived of it for so many years. But you must try to deserve this priceless boon. Let the world see that you merit it, and are able to maintain it by your good works. Don't let your joy carry you into excesses. Learn the laws and obey them; obey God's commandments and thank Him for giving you liberty, for to Him you owe all things. There, now, let me pass on; I have but little time to spare. I want to see the capital, and must return at once to Washington to secure to you that liberty which you seem to prize so highly.' The crowd shouted and screeched as if they

would split the firmament, though while the President was speaking you might have heard a pin drop."

Presently the little party was able to move on. "It never struck me," says Admiral Porter, "there was anyone in that multitude who would injure Mr. Lincoln; it seemed to me that he had an army of supporters there who could and would defend him against all the world. Our progress was very slow; we did not move a mile an hour, and the crowd was still increasing. It was a warm day, and the streets were dusty, owing to the immense gathering which covered every part of them, kicking up the dirt. The atmosphere was suffocating; but Mr. Lincoln could be seen plainly by every man, woman, and child, towering head and shoulders above that crowd; he overtopped every man there. He carried his hat in his hand, fanning his face, from which the perspiration was pouring. He looked as if he would have given his Presidency for a glass of water — I would have given my commission for half that.

"Now came another phase in the procession. As we entered the city every window flew up, from ground to roof, and every one was filled with eager, peering faces, which turned one to another, and seemed to ask, 'Is this large man, with soft eyes, and kind, benevolent face, the one who has been held up to us as the incarnation of wickedness, the destroyer of the South?' There was nothing like taunt or defiance in the faces of those who were gazing from the windows or craning their necks from the sidewalks to catch a view of the President. The look of every one was that of eager curiosity — nothing more. In a short time we reached the mansion of Mr. Davis, President of the Confederacy, occupied after the evacuation as the headquarters of General Weitzel and Shepley. There was great cheering going on. Hundreds of

civilians — I don't know who they were — assembled at the front of the house to welcome Mr. Lincoln. General Shepley made a speech and gave us a lunch, after which we entered a carriage and visited the State House — the late seat of the Confederate Congress. It was in dreadful disorder, betokening a sudden and unexpected flight; members' tables were upset, bales of Confederate scrip were lying about the floor, and many official documents of some value were scattered about.

“After this inspection I urged the President to go on board the ‘Malvern.’ I began to feel more heavily the responsibility resting upon me through the care of his person. The evening was approaching, and we were in a carriage open on all sides. He was glad to go; he was tired out, and wanted the quiet of the flag-ship. I was oppressed with uneasiness until we got on board and stood on the deck with the President safe; then there was not a happier man anywhere than myself.”

On Sunday, April 9, the President returned to Washington; and there he heard the thrilling news that Lee, with his whole army, had that day surrendered to Grant at Appomattox. Lincoln's first visit, after reaching the capital, was to the house of Secretary Seward, who had met with a severe accident during his absence, and was a prisoner in a sick room. Lincoln's heart was full of joy, and he entered immediately upon an account of his visit to Richmond and the glorious successes of the Union army; “throwing himself,” as Mr. Carpenter says, “in his almost boyish exultation, at full length across the bed, supporting his head upon one hand, and in this manner reciting the story of the collapse of the Rebellion. Concluding, he lifted himself up and said, ‘And now for a day of Thanksgiving!’”

In Washington, as in every city and town in the loyal States, there was the wildest enthusiasm over the good news from the army. Flags were flying everywhere, cannon were sounding, business was suspended, and the people gave themselves up to the impulses of joy and thanksgiving. Monday afternoon the workmen of the navy-yard marched to the White House, joining the thousands already there, and with bands playing and a tumult of rejoicing, called persistently for the President. After some delay Lincoln appeared at the window above the main entrance, and was greeted with loud and prolonged cheers and demonstrations of love and respect. He declined to make a formal speech, saying to the excited throng beneath:

I am very greatly rejoiced that an occasion has occurred so pleasurable that the people can't restrain themselves. I suppose that arrangements are being made for some sort of formal demonstration, perhaps this evening or to-morrow night. If there should be such a demonstration, I, of course, shall have to respond to it, and I shall have nothing to say if I dribble it out before. I see you have a band. I propose now closing up by requesting you to play a certain air or tune. I have always thought "Dixie" one of the best tunes I ever heard. I have heard that our adversaries over the way have attempted to appropriate it as a national air. I insisted yesterday that we had fairly captured it. I presented the question to the Attorney-General, and he gave his opinion that it is our lawful prize. I ask the band to give us a good turn upon it.

The band did give "a good turn" not only to "Dixie," but to the whimsical tune of "Yankee Doodle," after which Lincoln proposed three cheers for General Grant and all under his command; and then "three more cheers for our gallant navy," at the close of which he bowed and retired amid the inspiring



strains of "Hail Columbia" discoursed with vigor by the patriotic musicians.

As additional despatches were received from the army, the joyful excitement in Washington increased. Tuesday evening, April 11, the President's mansion, the Executive Departments, and many of the business places and private residences, were illuminated, bonfires were kindled, and fireworks sent off, in celebration of the great event which stirred the hearts of the people. A vast mass of citizens crowded about the White House, as Lincoln appeared at the historic East window and made his last speech to the American public. It was a somewhat lengthy address, and had been prepared and written out for the occasion. "We meet this evening, not in sorrow but in gladness of heart," began the President. "No part of the honor or praise is mine. To General Grant, his skilful officers and brave men, all belongs." Mr. Brooks, who was in the White House during the delivery of this address, gives the following glimpses behind the scenes: "As Lincoln spoke, the multitude was as silent as if the court-yard had been deserted. Then, as his speech was written on loose sheets, and the candles placed for him were too low, he took a light in his hand and went on with his reading. Soon coming to the end of a page, he found some difficulty in handling the manuscript and holding the candlestick. A friend who stood behind the drapery of the window reached out and took the candle, and held it until the end of the speech, and the President let the loose pages fall on the floor, one by one, as fast as he was through with them. Presently Tad, having refreshed himself at the dinner-table, came back in search of amusement. He gathered up the scattered sheets of the President's speech, and then amused himself by chasing the leaves as they fluttered from the speaker's hand. Growing impatient

at his father's delay to drop another page, Tad whispered, 'Come, give me another!' The President made a queer motion with his foot toward the boy, but otherwise showed no sign that he had other thoughts than those which he was dropping to the listeners beneath. Without was a vast sea of upturned faces, each eye fixed on the form of the President. Around the tall white pillars of the portico flowed an undulating surface of human beings, stirred by emotion and lighted with the fantastic colors of fireworks. At the window, his face irradiated with patriotic joy, was the much-beloved Lincoln, reading the speech that was to be his last to the people. Behind him crept back and forth, on his hands and knees, the boy of the White House, gathering up his father's carefully written pages, and occasionally lifting up his eager face waiting for more. It was before and behind the scenes. Sometimes I wonder, when I recall that night, how much of a father's love and thought of his boy might have been mingled in Lincoln's last speech to the eager multitude."

The President's speech on this occasion was largely devoted to the impending problem of Reconstruction in the South. The problem was complex and difficult, with no recognized principles or precedent for guidance. Said Lincoln: "Unlike the case of a war between independent nations, there is no authorized organization for us to treat with. No one man has authority to give up the rebellion for any other man. We simply must begin with and mould from disorganized and discordant elements. Nor is it a small additional embarrassment, that we, the loyal people, differ amongst ourselves as to the mode, manner, and measure of reconstruction. Let us all join in doing the acts necessary to restoring the proper practical relations between these States and the Union." The problem thus touched upon was one that had long

occupied the thoughts of Lincoln, especially since the downfall of the Confederacy had been imminent. His practical and far-seeing mind was already addressing itself to the new issues, duties, and responsibilities, which he saw opening before him, and which he well knew would demand all of his wisdom, firmness, and political sagacity. As was to be expected, a great diversity of views prevailed. A powerful faction in Congress, sympathized with by some members of the Cabinet, was for "making treason odious" and dealing with the insurgent States as conquered provinces that had forfeited all rights once held under the Constitution and were entitled only to such treatment as the Government chose to give them. Lincoln's ideas were very different. His mind was occupied with formulating a policy having for its object the welfare of the Southern people and the restoration of the rebellious States to the Union. His broad and statesmanlike views were outlined, the day after the public address just referred to, in discussing Secretary Welles's plans for convening the legislature of Virginia. Says Mr. Welles in his Diary: "His idea was that the members of the legislature, comprising the prominent and influential men of their respective counties, had better come together and undo their own work. Civil government must be reëstablished, he said, as soon as possible; there must be courts, and law and order, or society would be broken up, the disbanded armies would turn into robber bands and guerillas, which we must strive to prevent. These were the reasons why he wished prominent Virginians who had the confidence of the people to come together and turn themselves and their neighbors into good Union men." Lincoln had no thought of leaving any of these questions to the military authorities. In March he had directed a despatch from Stanton to Grant, saying: "The Presi-

dent wishes you to have no conference with General Lee, unless it be for the capitulation of his army, or on some other minor and purely military matter. He instructs me to say that you are not to decide, discuss, or confer upon any political question. Such questions the President *holds in his own hands*, and will submit them to no military conferences or conventions." During his meeting with Grant at Petersburg the President revealed to the General many of his plans for the rehabilitation of the South, and it could easily be seen that a spirit of magnanimity was uppermost in his heart. And at the conference with Grant, Sherman, and Porter, on board the "River Queen," the same subject was broached. "Though I cannot attempt to recall the words spoken by any one of the persons present on that occasion," says General Sherman, "I know we talked generally about what was to be done when Lee's and Johnston's armies were beaten and dispersed. On this point Mr. Lincoln was very full. He said that he had long thought of it, that he hoped this end could be reached without more bloodshed, but in any event he wanted us to get the men of the Southern armies disarmed and back to their homes; that he contemplated no revenge, no harsh measures, but quite the contrary, and that their suffering and hardships during the war would make them the more submissive to law." Says Hon. George Bancroft: "It was the nature of Mr. Lincoln to forgive. When hostilities ceased he who had always sent forth the flag with every one of its stars in the field was eager to receive back his returning countrymen."

One of the last stories of personal interviews with President Lincoln relates to his feeling of clemency for the men lately in rebellion. It is told by Senator Henderson of Missouri. "About the middle of March, 1865," says Senator Henderson, "I went to the White

House to ask the President to pardon a number of men who had been languishing in Missouri prisons for various offenses, all political. Some of them had been my schoolmates, and their mothers and sisters and sweethearts had persisted in appeals that I should use my influence for their release. Since it was evident to me that the Confederacy was in its last throes, I felt that the pardon of most of these prisoners would do more good than harm. I had separated them, according to the gravity of their offenses, into three classes; and handing the first list to him, I said, 'Mr. President, the session of the Senate is closed, and I am about to start for home. The war is virtually over. Grant is pretty certain to get Lee and his army, and Sherman is plainly able to take care of Johnston. In my opinion the best way to prevent guerilla warfare at the end of organized resistance will be to show clemency to these Southern sympathizers.' Lincoln shook his head and said, 'Henderson, I am deeply indebted to you, and I want to show it; but don't ask me at this time to pardon rebels. I can't do it. People are continually blaming me for being too lenient. Don't encourage such fellows by inducing me to turn loose a lot of men who perhaps ought to be hanged.' I answered, 'Mr. President, these prisoners and their friends tell me that for them the war is over; and it will surely have a good influence now to let them go.' He replied, 'Henderson, my conscience tells me that I must not do it.' But I persisted. 'Mr. President, you *should* do it. It is necessary for good feeling in Missouri that these people be released.' 'If I sign this list as a whole, will you be responsible for the future good behavior of these men?' he asked. 'Yes,' I replied, 'I will.' 'Then I'll take the risk.' He wrote the word *Pardoned*, signed the order of release, and returned the paper to me. 'Thank you, Mr. Presi-

dent,' I said, 'but that is not all. I have another list.' 'You 're not going to make me let loose another lot!' he exclaimed. 'Yes,' I answered, 'and my argument is the same as before. The guilt of these men is doubtful. Mercy must be the policy of peace.' With the only words approaching profanity that I ever heard him utter, he exclaimed, '*I 'll be durned if I don't sign it!* Now, Henderson,' he said, as he handed me the list, 'remember that you are responsible to me for these men, and if they don't behave *I 'll put you in prison for their sins.*' "

Lincoln's whole feeling toward the vanquished Southern people was one of peace and magnanimity. While many were clamoring for the execution of the Southern leaders, and especially Jefferson Davis, Lincoln said, only a day or two before his death: "This talk about Mr. Davis wearies me. I hope he will mount a fleet horse, reach the shores of the Gulf of Mexico, and ride *so far into its waters* that we shall never see him again." And then he told a pat story — perhaps his last — of a boy in Springfield, "who saved up his money and bought a 'coon,' which, after the novelty wore off, became a great nuisance. He was one day leading him through the streets, and had his hands full to keep clear of the little vixen, who had torn his clothes half off him. At length he sat down on the curb-stone, completely fagged out. A man passing was stopped by the lad's disconsolate appearance, and asked the matter. 'Oh,' was the only reply, 'this coon is such a *trouble* to me!' 'Why don't you get rid of him, then?' said the gentleman. '*Hush!*' said the boy, 'don't you see he is gnawing his rope off? I am going to let him do it, and then I will go home and tell the folks *that he got away from me.*' "

At the last Cabinet meeting ever attended by Lincoln, held in the morning of the day on which he was

shot, the subject of Reconstruction was again uppermost, and various plans were presented and discussed. Secretary Stanton brought forward a plan or ordinance which he said he had prepared with much care and after a great deal of reflection. It was arranged that a copy of this should be furnished to each member of the Cabinet, for criticism and suggestion. "In the meantime," says Secretary Welles, "we were requested by the President to deliberate and carefully consider the proposition. He remarked that this was *the great question* now before us, and *we must soon begin to act.*" What that action would have been had Lincoln lived — what wrong and misery would have been spared to the South and shame and dishonor to the North — no one can doubt who comprehends the fibre of that kindly, just, and indomitable soul.

## CHAPTER XXIX

The Last of Earth — Events of the Last Day of Lincoln's Life — The Last Cabinet Meeting — The Last Drive with Mrs. Lincoln — Incidents of the Afternoon — Riddance to Jacob Thompson — A Final Act of Pardon — The Fatal Evening — The Visit to the Theatre — The Assassin's Shot — A Scene of Horror — Particulars of the Crime — The Dying President — A Nation's Grief — Funeral Obsequies — The Return to Illinois — At Rest in Oak Ridge Cemetery.

**I**T is something to be ever gratefully remembered, that the last day of Lincoln's life was filled with sunshine. His cares and burdens slipped from him like a garment, and his spirit was filled with a blessed and benignant peace.

On the morning of that fatal Friday, the 14th day of April, the President had a long conversation at breakfast with his son Robert, then a member of Grant's staff, who had just arrived from the front with additional particulars of Lee's surrender, of which event he had been a witness. The President listened with close attention to the interesting recital; then, taking up a portrait of General Lee, which his son had brought him, he placed it on the table before him, where he scanned it long and thoughtfully. Presently he said: "It is a good face. It is the face of a noble, brave man. I am glad that the war is over at last." Looking upon Robert, he continued: "Well, my son, you have returned safely from the front. The war is now closed, and we will soon live in peace with the brave men who have been fighting against us. I trust that the era of good feeling has returned, and that henceforth we shall live in harmony together."



After breakfast the President received Speaker Colfax, spending an hour or more in discussing his plans regarding the adjustment of matters in the South. This was followed by an interview with Hon. John P. Hale, the newly appointed Minister to Spain, and by calls of congratulation from members of Congress and old friends from Illinois. Afterwards he took a short drive with General Grant, who had just come to the city to consult regarding the disbandment of the army and the parole of prisoners. The people were wild with enthusiasm, and wherever the President and General Grant appeared they were greeted with cheers, the clapping of hands, waving of handkerchiefs, and every possible demonstration of delight.

At the Cabinet meeting held at noon the President was accompanied by General Grant. The meeting is thus described by one who was present, Secretary Welles: "Congratulations were interchanged, and earnest inquiry was made whether any information had been received from General Sherman. General Grant, who was invited to remain, said he was expecting hourly to hear from Sherman, and had a good deal of anxiety on the subject. The President remarked that the news would come soon and come favorably, he had no doubt, for he had last night his usual dream which had preceded nearly every important event of the war. I inquired the particulars of this remarkable dream. He said it was in my department—it related to the water; that he seemed to be in a singular and indescribable vessel, but always the same, and that he was moving with great rapidity toward a dark and indefinite shore; that he had had this singular dream preceding the firing on Sumter, the battles of Bull Run, Antietam, Gettysburg, Stone River, Vicksburg, Wilmington, etc. General Grant remarked, with some emphasis and asperity, that Stone River was no vic-

tory — that a few such victories would have ruined the country, and he knew of no important results from it. The President said that perhaps he should not altogether agree with him, but whatever might be the facts his singular dream preceded that fight. Victory did not always follow his dream, but the event and results were important. He had no doubt that a battle had taken place or was about being fought, ‘and Johnston will be beaten, for I had this strange dream again last night. It must relate to Sherman; my thoughts are in that direction, and *I know of no other very important event which is likely just now to occur.*’ ” “Great events,” adds Mr. Welles in his Diary, “did indeed follow; for within a few hours the good and gentle as well as truly great man who narrated his dream closed forever his earthly career.”

After the Cabinet meeting the President took a drive with Mrs. Lincoln, expressing a wish that no one should accompany them. His heart was filled with a solemn joy, which awoke memories of the past to mingle with hopes for the future; and in this subdued moment he desired to be alone with the one who stood nearest to him in human relationship. In the course of their talk together, he said: “Mary, we have had a hard time of it since we came to Washington; but the war is over, and with God’s blessing we may hope for four years of peace and happiness, and then we will go back to Illinois and pass the rest of our lives in quiet.” He spoke, says Mr. Arnold, “of his old Springfield home; and recollections of his early days, his little brown cottage, the law office, the court room, the green bag for his briefs and law papers, his adventures when riding the circuit, came thronging back to him. The tension under which he had for so long been kept was removed, and he was like a boy out of school. ‘We have laid by,’ said he to his wife, ‘some

money, and during this term we will try and save up more, but shall not have enough to support us. We will go back to Illinois, and I will open a law office at Springfield or Chicago, and practise law, and at least do enough to help give us a livelihood.' Such were the dreams, the day-dreams of Lincoln, on the last day of his earthly life."

Mr. Neill, the President's private secretary, states that between three and four o'clock of this day he had occasion to seek the President to procure his signature to a paper. "I found," says Mr. Neill, "that he had retired to the private parlor of the house for lunch. While I was looking over the papers on his table, to see if I could find the desired commission, he came back, eating an apple. I told him what I was looking for, and as I talked he placed his hand upon the bell-pull. I said: 'For whom are you going to ring?' Placing his hand upon my coat, he spoke but two words: 'Andrew Johnson.' 'Then,' I said, 'I will come in again.' As I was leaving the room, the Vice-President had been ushered in, and the President advanced and took him by the hand."

Charles A. Dana, the Assistant Secretary of War, says that his last recollections of President Lincoln are indelibly associated with the seditious Jacob Thompson. "Late in the afternoon," says Mr. Dana, "a despatch was received at the War Department from the provost marshal of Portland, Maine, saying that he had received information that Jacob Thompson would arrive in Portland during that night, in order to take there the Canadian steamer which was to sail for Liverpool. On reading this despatch to Mr. Stanton, the latter said, 'Order him to be arrested — but no; you had better take it over to the President.' I found Mr. Lincoln in the inner room of his business office at the White House, with his coat off, washing

his hands preparatory to a drive. 'Hello,' said he, 'what is it?' Listening to the despatch, he asked, 'What does Stanton say?' 'He thinks he ought to be arrested,' I replied. 'Well,' he continued, drawing his words, 'I rather guess not. When you have an elephant on your hands, and he wants to run away, better let him run.' "

During the afternoon the President signed a pardon for a soldier sentenced to be shot for desertion; remarking, as he did so, "Well, I think the boy can do us more good above ground than under ground." He also approved an application for the discharge, on taking the oath of allegiance, of a Southern prisoner, on whose petition he wrote, "*Let it be done.*" This act of mercy was his last official order.

It had been decided early in the day that the President and Mrs. Lincoln would attend Ford's Theatre in the evening, to witness the play of "The American Cousin." Lincoln had invited General Grant to accompany his party to the theatre, saying that the people would expect to see him and should not be disappointed. But the General had declined, as Mrs. Grant was anxious to start that afternoon to visit their children, who were at school in Burlington, New Jersey.

As the hour approached for leaving for the theatre, the President was engaged in a conversation with two friends — Speaker Colfax and Hon. George Ashmun of Massachusetts. The business on which they had met not being concluded, the President gave Mr. Ashmun a card on which he had written these words: "Allow Mr. Ashmun and friend to come in at 9 A. M. to-morrow — A. Lincoln." He then turned to Mr. Colfax, saying, "You are going with Mrs. Lincoln and me to the theatre, I hope." Mr. Colfax pleaded other engagements, when Lincoln remarked: "Mr. Sum-

ner has the gavel of the Confederate Congress, which he got at Richmond to hand to the Secretary of War. But I insisted then that he must give it to you; and you tell him for me to hand it over." He then rose, but seemed reluctant to go, expressing a half-determination to delay a while longer. It was undoubtedly to avoid disappointing the audience, to whom his presence had been promised, that he went to the play-house that night. At the door he stopped and said to Speaker Colfax, who was about to leave for the Pacific coast, "Colfax, do not forget to tell the people in the mining regions, as you pass through, what I told you this morning about the development when peace comes. I will telegraph you at San Francisco."

It was nine o'clock when the Presidential party reached the theatre. The place was crowded; "many ladies in rich and gay costumes, officers in their uniforms, many well-known citizens, young folks, the usual clusters of gaslights, the usual magnetism of so many people, cheerful, with perfumes, music of violins and flutes — and over all, and saturating all, that vast, vague wonder, Victory, the Nation's victory, the triumph of the Union, filling the air, the thought, the sense, with exhilaration more than all perfumes." As the President entered he was greeted with tremendous cheers, to which he responded with genial courtesy. The box reserved for him, at the right of the stage, a little above the floor, was draped and festooned with flags. As the party were seated, the daughter of Senator Harris of New York occupied the corner nearest the stage; next her was Mrs. Lincoln; and behind them sat the President and Major Rathbone, the former being nearest the door.

In his quiet chair he sate,  
Pure of malice or guile,

Stainless of fear or hate;  
 And there played a pleasant smile  
 On the rough and careworn face, —  
 For his heart was all the while  
 On means of mercy and grace.

The brave old flag drooped o'er him, —  
 A fold in the hard hand lay;  
 He looked perchance on the play, —  
 But the scene was a shadow before him,  
 For his thoughts were far away.

It was half-past ten o'clock, and the audience was absorbed in the progress of the play, when suddenly a pistol shot, loud and sharp, rang through the theatre. All eyes were instantly directed toward the President's box, whence the report proceeded. A moment later, the figure of a man, holding a smoking pistol in one hand and a dagger in the other, appeared at the front of the President's box, and sprang to the stage, some eight or ten feet below, shouting as he did so, "*Sic semper tyrannis!*" He fell as he struck the stage; but quickly recovering himself, sprang through the side-wings and escaped from the theatre by a rear door.

At the moment of the assassination a single actor, Mr. Hawk, was on the stage. In his account of the tragical event he says: "When I heard the shot fired, I turned, looked up at the President's box, heard the man exclaim, '*Sic semper tyrannis!*' saw him jump from the box, seize the flag on the staff, and drop to the stage. He slipped when he struck the stage, but got upon his feet in a moment, brandished a large knife, crying, 'The South shall be free,' turned his face in the direction where I stood, and I recognized him as John Wilkes Booth. He ran towards me, and I, seeing the knife, thought I was the one he was after, and ran off the stage and up a flight of stairs. He

made his escape out of a door directly in the rear of the theatre, mounted a horse, and rode off. The above all occurred in the space of a quarter of a minute, and at the time I did not know the President was shot."

Scarcely had the horror-stricken audience witnessed the leap and flight of the assassin when a woman's shriek pierced through the theatre, recalling all eyes to the President's box. The scene that ensued is described with singular vividness by the poet Walt Whitman, who was present: "A moment's hush — a scream — the cry of murder — Mrs. Lincoln leaning out of the box, with ashy cheeks and lips, with involuntary cry, pointing to the retreating figure, '*He has killed the President!*' And still a moment's strange, incredulous suspense — and then the deluge! — then that mixture of horror, noises, uncertainty — (the sound, somewhere back, of a horse's hoofs clattering with speed) — the people burst through chairs and railing, and break them up — that noise adds to the queerness of the scene — there is inextricable confusion and terror — women faint — feeble persons fall and are trampled on — many cries of agony are heard — the broad stage suddenly fills to suffocation with a dense and motley crowd, like some horrible carnival — the audience rush generally upon it — at least the strong men do — the actors and actresses are there in their play costumes and painted faces, with mortal fright showing through the rouge — some trembling, some in tears — the screams and calls, confused talk — redoubled, trebled — two or three manage to pass up water from the stage to the President's box — others try to clamber up. Amidst all this, a party of soldiers, two hundred or more, hearing what is done, suddenly appear; they storm the house, inflamed with fury, literally charging the audience with fixed bayonets, muskets, and pistols,

shouting, 'Clear out! clear out!' . . . And in the midst of that pandemonium of senseless haste — the infuriated soldiers, the audience, the stage, its actors and actresses, its paints and spangles and gaslights, — the life blood from those veins, the best and sweetest of the land, drips slowly down, and death's ooze already begins its little bubbles on the lips."

It appears that Booth, the assassin, had long been plotting the murder of the President, and was awaiting a favorable moment for its execution. He had visited the theatre at half-past eleven on the morning of the 14th, and learned that a box had been taken for the President that evening. He engaged a fleet horse for a saddle-ride in the afternoon, and left it at a convenient place. In the evening he rode to the theatre, and, leaving the animal in charge of an accomplice, entered the house. Making his way to the door of the President's box, and taking a small Derringer pistol in one hand and a double-edged dagger in the other, he thrust his arm into the entrance, where the President, sitting in an arm-chair, presented to his view the back and side of his head. A flash, a sharp report, a puff of smoke, and the fatal bullet had entered the President's brain.

Major Rathbone, who occupied a seat in the President's box, testifies that he was sitting with his back toward the door, when he heard the discharge of a pistol behind him, and looking around saw through the smoke a man between the door and the President. Major Rathbone instantly sprang toward him and seized him; the man wrested himself from his grasp, and made a violent thrust at the Major's breast with a large knife. The Major parried the blow by striking it up, and received a wound in his left arm. The man rushed to the front of the box, and the Major endeavored to seize him again, but only caught his clothes



as he was leaping over the railing of the box. Major Rathbone then turned to the President. His position was not changed; his head was slightly bent forward, and his eyes were closed.

As soon as the surgeons who had been summoned completed their hasty examination, the unconscious form of the President was borne from the theatre to a house across the street, and laid upon his death-bed. Around him were gathered Surgeon-General Barnes, Vice-President Johnson, Senator Sumner, Secretaries Stanton and Welles, Generals Halleck and Meigs, Attorney-General Speed, Postmaster-General Dennison, Mr. McCulloch, Speaker Colfax, and other intimate friends who had been hastily summoned. Mrs. Lincoln sat in an adjoining room, prostrate and overwhelmed, with her son Robert. The examination of the surgeons had left no room for hope. The watchers remained through the night by the bedside of the stricken man, who showed no signs of consciousness; and a little after seven o'clock in the morning — Saturday the 15th of April — he breathed his last.

A vivid account of the death-bed scene, together with particulars of the attacks upon Secretary Seward and his son Frederick a half-hour later than the attack upon the President, is furnished in the contemporaneous record of Secretary Welles, a singularly cool observer and clear narrator. "I had retired to bed about half-past ten on the evening of the 14th of April," writes Mr. Welles, "and was just getting asleep when Mrs. Welles, my wife, said some one was at our door. . . . I arose at once and raised a window, when my messenger, James Smith, called to me that Mr. Lincoln, the President, had been shot; and said Secretary Seward and his son, Assistant Secretary Frederick Seward, were assassinated. . . . I immediately dressed myself, and, against the earnest remonstrance and ap-

peals of my wife, went directly to Mr. Seward's, whose residence was on the east side of the square, mine being on the north. . . . Entering the house, I found the lower hall and office full of persons, and among them most of the foreign legations, all anxiously inquiring what truth there was in the horrible rumors afloat. . . . At the head of the first stairs I met the elder Mrs. Seward, who was scarcely able to speak, but desired me to proceed up to Mr. Seward's room. . . . As I entered, I met Miss Fanny Seward, with whom I exchanged a single word, and proceeded to the foot of the bed. Dr. Verdi, and, I think, two others, were there. The bed was saturated with blood. The Secretary was lying on his back, the upper part of his head covered by a cloth, which extended down over his eyes. His mouth was open, the lower jaw dropping down. I exchanged a few whispered words with Dr. Verdi. Secretary Stanton, who came after but almost simultaneously with me, made inquiries in a louder tone till admonished by a word from one of the physicians. We almost immediately withdrew and went into the adjoining front room, where lay Frederick Seward. His eyes were open, but he did not move them, nor a limb, nor did he speak. Doctor White, who was in attendance, told me he was unconscious and more dangerously injured than his father. . . . As we descended the stairs, I asked Stanton what he had heard in regard to the President that was reliable. He said the President was shot at Ford's Theatre, that he had seen a man who was present and witnessed the occurrence. I said I would go immediately to the White House. Stanton told me the President was not there but was at the theatre. 'Then,' said I, 'let us go immediately there.' . . . The President had been carried across the street from the theatre, to the house of a Mr. Peterson. We entered by ascending a flight of steps above the

basement and passing through a long hall to the rear, where the President lay extended on a bed, breathing heavily. Several surgeons were present, at least six, I should think more. Among them I was glad to observe Dr. Hall, who, however, soon left. I inquired of Dr. H., as I entered, the true condition of the President. He replied the President was dead to all intents, although he might live three hours or perhaps longer. . . . The giant sufferer lay extended diagonally across the bed, which was not long enough for him. He had been stripped of his clothes. His large arms, which were occasionally exposed, were of a size which one would scarce have expected from his spare appearance. His slow, full respiration lifted the clothes with each breath that he took. His features were calm and striking. I had never seen them appear to better advantage than for the first hour, perhaps, that I was there. After that, his right eye began to swell and that part of his face became discolored. . . . Senator Sumner was there, I think, when I entered. If not, he came in soon after, as did Speaker Colfax, Mr. Secretary McCulloch, and the other members of the Cabinet, with the exception of Mr. Seward. A double guard was stationed at the door and on the sidewalk, to repress the crowd, which was of course highly excited and anxious. The room was small and overcrowded. The surgeons and members of the Cabinet were as many as should have been in the room, but there were many more, and the hall and other rooms in the front or main house were full. One of these rooms was occupied by Mrs. Lincoln and her attendants, with Miss Harris. Mrs. Dixon and Mrs. Kinney came to her about twelve o'clock. About once an hour Mrs. Lincoln would repair to the bedside of her dying husband and with lamentations and tears remain until overcome by emotion. . . . A door which

opened upon a porch or gallery, and also the windows, were kept open for fresh air. The night was dark, cloudy, and damp, and about six it began to rain. I remained in the room until then without sitting or leaving it, when, there being a vacant chair which some one left at the foot of the bed, I occupied it for nearly two hours, listening to the heavy groans, and witnessing the wasting life of the good and great man who was expiring before me. . . . A little before seven in the morning I re-entered the room where the dying President was rapidly drawing near the closing moments. His wife soon after made her last visit to him. The death-struggle had begun. Robert, his son, stood with several others at the head of the bed. The respiration of the President became suspended at intervals, and at last entirely ceased at twenty-two minutes past seven o'clock."

The news of the President's assassination flashed rapidly over the country, everywhere causing the greatest consternation and grief. The revulsion from the joy which had filled all loyal hearts at the prospects of peace was sudden and profound. All business ceased, and gave way to mourning and lamentation. The flags, so lately unfurled in exultation, were now dropped at half-mast, and emblems of sorrow were hung from every door and window. Men walked with a dejected air. They gathered together in groups in the street, and spoke of the murder of the President as of a personal calamity. The nation's heart was smitten sorely, and signs of woe were in every face and movement.

A scene which transpired in Philadelphia, the morning after the murder, reflects the picture presented in every city and town in the United States. "We had taken our seats," says the delineator, "in the early car to ride down town, men and boys going to work.

The morning papers had come up from town as usual, and the men unrolled them to read as the car started. The eye fell on the black border and ominous column-lines. Before we could speak, a good Quaker at the head of the car broke out in horror: 'My God! What's this? *Lincoln is assassinated.*' The driver stopped the car, and came in to hear the awful tidings. There stood the car, mid-street, as the heavy news was read in the gray dawn of that ill-fated day. Men bowed their faces in their hands, and on the straw-covered floor hot tears fell fast. Silently the driver took the bells from his horses, and we started like a hearse cityward. What a changed city since the day before! Then all was joy over the end of the war; now we were plunged in a deeper gulf of woe. The sun rose on a city smitten and weeping. All traffic stood still; the icy hand of death lay flat on the heart of commerce, and it gave not a throb. Men stood by their open stores saying, with hands on each other's shoulders, 'Our President is dead.' Over and over, in a dazed way, they said the fateful syllables, as if the bullet that tore through the weary brain at Washington had palsied the nation. The mute news-boy on the corner said never a word as he handed to the speechless buyers the damp sheets from the press; only he brushed, with unwashed hand, the tears from his dirty cheeks. Groups stood listening on the pavement with faces to the earth, while one, in choking voice, read the telegrams; then with a look they departed in unworded woe, each cursing bitterly in his breast the 'deep damnation of his taking off.' Mill operatives, clerks, workers, school children, all came home, the faltering voice of the teacher telling the wondering children to 'go home, there will be no school to-day.' The housewife looked up amazed to see husband and children coming home so soon. The father's face

frightened her and she cried, 'What is wrong, husband?' He could not speak the news, but the wee girl with the school-books said, 'Mamma, they 've killed the President.' Ere noon every house wore crape; it was as if there lay a dead son in every home. For hours a sad group hung around the bulletins, hoping against hope; then, when the last hope died, turned sullenly homeward, saying, 'When all was won, and all was done, then to strike him down!' The flags in the harbor fell to half-mast; the streets were rivers of inky streamers; from door-knobs floated crape; and even the unbelled car-horses seemed to draw the black-robed cars more quietly than before."

On Saturday the remains were borne to the White House, where they were embalmed and placed on a grand catafalque in the East Room. Little "Tad" was overcome with grief. All day Saturday he was inconsolable, but on Sunday morning the sun rose bright and beautiful and into his childish heart came the thought that all was well with his father. He said to a gentleman who called upon Mrs. Lincoln, "Do you think, sir, that my father has gone to heaven?" "I have not a doubt of it," was the reply. "Then," said the little fellow in broken voice, "I am glad he has gone there, for he was never happy after he came here. This was not a good place for him!" Tuesday the White House was thrown open to admit friends who desired to look upon the still form as it lay in death. Wednesday, the 19th, the funeral services took place. Mrs. Lincoln was too ill to be present; but her two sons sat near the coffin in the East Room. Next in order were ranged Andrew Johnson (now President) and the members of the Cabinet, and after them the foreign representatives, the chief men of the nation, and a large body of mourning citizens. The services were conducted jointly by the Rev. Dr. Hall, Bishop

Simpson, Dr. Gray, and the Rev. Dr. Gurley, the latter delivering the discourse. At two o'clock the funeral cortege started for the Capitol, where the remains were to lie in state until the following morning. The procession was long and imposing. "There were no truer mourners," says Secretary Welles, "than the poor colored people who crowded the streets, joined the procession, and exhibited their woe, bewailing the loss of him whom they regarded as a benefactor and father. Women as well as men, with their little children, thronged the streets, sorrow and trouble and distress depicted on their countenances and in their bearing. The vacant holiday expression had given way to real grief." The body was borne into the rotunda, amidst funeral dirges and military salutes; and the religious exercises of the occasion were concluded. A guard was stationed near the coffin, and the public were again admitted to take their farewell of the dead.

While these obsequies were being performed at Washington, similar ceremonies were observed in every part of the country. It had been decided to convey the remains of Lincoln to the home which he left four years before with such solemn and affectionate words of parting. The funeral train left Washington on the 21st. Its passage through the principal Eastern States and cities of the Union was a most mournful and impressive spectacle. The heavily craped train, its sombre engine swathed in black, moved through the land like an eclipse. At every point vast crowds assembled to gain a tearful glimpse as it sped past.

Over the breast of the spring, the land, amid cities,  
Amid lanes and through old woods, where lately the  
violets peep'd from the ground, spotting the  
gray debris,

Amid the grass in the fields each side of the lanes,  
passing the endless grass,

Passing the yellow-spear'd wheat, every grain from  
 its shroud in the dark-brown fields uprisen,  
 Passing the apple-tree blows of white and pink in the  
 orchards,  
 Carrying a corpse to where it shall rest in the grave,  
 Night and day journeys a coffin.

Coffin that passes through lanes and streets,  
 Through day and night with the great cloud darken-  
 ing the land,  
 With the pomp of the inloop'd flags, with the cities  
 draped in black,  
 With the show of the States themselves as of crape-  
 veil'd women standing,  
 With processions long and winding and the flambeaus  
 of the night,  
 With the countless torches lit, with the silent sea of  
 faces and the unbared heads,  
 With the waiting depot, the arriving coffin, and the  
 sombre faces,  
 With dirges through the night, with the thousand  
 voices rising strong and solemn,  
 With all the mournful voices of the dirges pour'd  
 around the coffin,  
 The dim-lit churches and the shuddering organs —  
 With the tolling, tolling bells' perpetual clang.

At the principal cities delays were made to enable  
 the people to pay their tribute of respect to the re-  
 mains of their beloved President. Through Baltimore,  
 Harrisburg, Philadelphia, the train passed to New  
 York City, where a magnificent funeral was held;  
 thence along the shore of the Hudson river to Albany,  
 thence westward through the principal cities of New  
 York, Ohio, and Northern Indiana, the cortege wended  
 its solemn way, reaching, on the 1st of May, the city  
 of Chicago. Here very extensive preparations for  
 funeral obsequies had been made by the thousands who



had known him in his life, and other thousands who had learned to love him and now mourned his death.

On the 3d of May the funeral train reached Springfield, where old friends and neighbors tenderly received the dust of their beloved dead. Funeral services were held, and for twenty-four hours the catafalque remained in the hall of the House, where thousands of tear-dimmed eyes gazed for the last time upon the familiar face. Then, on the morning of the 4th of May, a sorrowing procession escorted the remains to the beautiful grounds of Oak Ridge Cemetery, to rest at last from the care and tumult of a troubled life. To this hallowed spot have come the gray-haired soldiers of that stormy war, reverently to salute their great commander's tomb. Here shall long be paid the loving homage of the dusky race that he redeemed. And pilgrims from every land, who value human worth and human liberty, bring here their tributes of respect. And here, while the Government that he saved endures, shall throng his patriot countrymen, not idly to lament his loss, but to resolve *that from this honored dead they take increased devotion to that cause for which he gave the last full measure of devotion; that the dead shall not have died in vain; that the nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.*



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